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AIDS TO FAITH.*

The swarm of controversial writings of every form and magnitude which issued from the press as soon as the theological world discovered the existence of the "Essays and Reviews," remained, as our readers are aware, unnoticed in our pages. Very few of them appeared with such credentials as to claim examination at the hands of those who looked at the question only from the scientific side; while all were alike tainted with the inherent vice of theological controversy. To prove that Dr. Williams had made a blunder in Hebrew criticism—to find a weak place in Mr. Powell's metaphysical panoply—to launch a bitter sarcasm at Mr. Wilson's place in the Church, or to hound an eager pack of bibliolatrists upon Mr. Jowett,—might be a triumph dear to the heart of many an evangelical champion, who in return would not fail of his reward, in the assurance from pew and press that he had utterly routed the sceptic host, and once more saved the emperilled Church. But to critics who desire to mark the slow progress and revolution of opinions, all this was no better than an idle beating of the air. It only proved, what was very well known before, that a large party in all English churches held in abhorrence the opinions expressed in the Essays; and that in seven brief treatises on weighty theological topics, written by seven different men, it was possible to find inconsistencies or even errors of statement. Now, however, in the volume before us, the controversy has really taken a step in advance. It consists of nine essays, by eight distinguished divines of the Church of England, not specifically taking up the same points as the "Essays and Reviews," yet covering, for the most part, the same ground. *That* was a deliberate expression of opinion by a certain party in the Church; *this* is an expression of opinion, equally deliberate, by another party, firmly and conscientiously opposed to the first. Although in the order of its publication controversial, in its method, and to a large extent in its tone, it is didactic. Had the "Essays and Reviews" never been written, it would have deserved and received the careful attention of scholars.

* Aids to Faith: a Series of Theological Essays, by several Writers. Edited by William Thomson, D.D., Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. 8vo. Pp. 469. London—Murray. 1861.

It is a learned, moderate and religious exposition of some of the leading principles of orthodox English Christianity.

The first essay, "On Miracles as Evidences of Christianity," by Prof. Mansel, answers to Mr. Baden Powell's article in the "Essays and Reviews." The second, "On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity," by Dr. Fitzgerald, who has just been translated from the Bishopric of Cork to that of Killaloe, pursues in part the track of Mr. Pattison. An essay by Dr. M'Caul on "The Mosaic Record of Creation," one by Dr. Ellicott, the new Dean of Exeter, on "Scripture and its Interpretation," and one by the Rev. F. C. Cook on "Ideology and Subscription," are plainly intended as antidotes to those of Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Jowett and Mr. Wilson respectively. The remaining papers, which it is not possible to pair off with any in the heretical volume, are the third, "On Prophecy," by Dr. M'Caul; the sixth, "On the Genuineness and Authenticity of the Pentateuch," by Prof. Rawlinson; the seventh, "On Inspiration," by Prof. Browne; and the eighth, on "The Death of Christ," by the editor.

Before proceeding to any detailed account and criticism of these essays, we desire at once to acknowledge their prevailingly courteous and moderate tone. The references to "Essays and Reviews" are few in number, and in expression neither angry nor sarcastic. There is, it is true, no affectation of scientific indifference about them; the contest is not a mere passage-at-arms where a laurel wreath is the only prize of victory, but a battle for hearth and altar; and the magnitude of the issue must needs be spoken of in grave and weighty words. But there is no personal inuendo, no ascription of motives, no calling of hard names. And while the literary power displayed in the several essays is, as might be expected, very various, all are clearly and soberly expressed, and one or two rise to a considerable height of force and eloquence.

It is, however, not to be denied that in a volume of this kind the editor ought either to abdicate his function altogether, or to perform it more completely than is the case in this volume or in its more celebrated prototype. Nothing has more excited our critical amazement than the various arguments which have been employed to shew that the "Essays and Reviews" ought to be considered as an organic whole, in which every contributor is really responsible for every contribution. Mr. Powell's unfortunate essay, which stood alone among the rest, the product of a different tendency of thought, the representative of a peculiar philosophy, ought surely to have been sufficient evidence of the contrary. Those who read the "Essays and Reviews" with minds already instructed on the subjects of which it treated, and trained to independent reflection upon them, would no doubt be able to take up and to assimilate the mental food which was there so

liberally provided; but we cannot understand how the book should have had other than a confusing and bewildering effect on readers whom it admitted for the first time to the regions of theological speculation. But what was, to some extent, a weakness in attack, becomes a far greater weakness in defence. The wall of the fortress is not completely portioned out among the garrison: here a rampart, there a battlement, is left without a guard, while upon others, not more important, the defence is doubled. The book has no order: if we are called upon to account for the fact that "Miracles" occupy the van and "Interpretation" the rear, we can only suppose that Mr. Mansel is a ready workman, and that Dean Ellicott has been busy with his new preferment. In many cases, in which important theories actually receive adequate discussion, it is not till long after every necessary inference has been drawn from them: the question of the authority of Scripture is never touched till the end of the book, yet is everywhere assumed from the beginning. We can hardly guess what the editor's duty has been, except perhaps to bring the whole volume up to a reputable standard of orthodoxy. If he had himself laid out an orderly and systematic plan of the work, and superintended the execution of each portion of the whole by a competent workman, he would have produced a volume which might have been a far more efficient "aid to faith" than this, with all its relative merits, can ever be.

Another more serious defect of the work, which can only be partly accounted for by the multiplicity of its authorship, is, that more than one fundamental question receives but a partial discussion. The several writers perpetually touch upon topics which, if accurately investigated, lead to deeper depths either than they know of or are willing to explore. So marked is this characteristic, as almost to warrant the inference that these writers, learned and thoughtful as they undoubtedly are, are yet unacquainted with the real conditions of the controversy in which they are engaged. Antecedently to discussion, there is no common ground for them and their opponents. Nothing can be assumed; everything must be settled by distinct agreement. When Churchman argues with Churchman, or Churchman with orthodox Dissenter, the Scriptures at least are a court of appeal recognized by both sides, and the procedure by which the decision of the court is invoked is the same. But it is the peculiarity of this contest (as indeed of our own contests with orthodoxy) that the contending parties accept in a different sense the principles which lie at the bottom of all religious controversy, and that every argument, on either side, must be firmly attached to some fundamental assumption. It is a fight, not between two developments of one system, but between two quite diverse systems of theology: a great gulf separates the hostile armies,

across which but few missiles on either side reach their mark. A thoughtful Unitarian would read a large part of this volume without feeling himself within the grasp of its reasonings. He might acknowledge their force and their coherence, but would destroy them by denying their premisses. To those who stand within their range, they may prove a "sharp sword of the spirit;"—to him, "telum imbelle, sine ictu."

To support this statement by instances. The defender of the infallibility of scripture always finds the case of the Old weaker than that of the New Testament. It becomes, therefore, a matter of importance to knit, if possible, the two together, and to concentrate the weight of the whole structure upon the strongest point. There are more ways than one of effecting this object: the historical development of Christianity from Judaism; prophecy; the theory of type and antitype; and that to which we desire at present to draw attention—the quotations from the Old in the New Testament, especially those which the evangelists put into the mouth of Christ. To these quotations the writers of "Aids to Faith" make a perpetual appeal. If Matthew quotes from Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," it is plain proof that a double meaning exists in the simplest prophetic utterance; if Paul finds in Sarah and Hagar an "allegory" of "the two covenants," the whole theory of type and antitype is held to be established; if Christ applies to himself a declaration of the Psalmist, Messianic prophecy is set up on a foundation which it were impious to assail. Nay, questions of authenticity which were altogether strange to the biblical ages are imported into them by these critics, and "apostles, prophets, confessors, our Blessed Lord Himself," are made to bear witness to the "Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch." Yet all these inferences, whatever their intrinsic value, are dependent upon the answers to be given to a prior series of questions, to which no allusion is here made. And these questions themselves are of two kinds, as the quotations which they affect fall into two classes. In the case of Paul, whose undoubted writings we possess, we have to examine the quotations themselves, with a view to determining for what purpose and according to what method they were made. Did he use phrases and appeal to examples of Holy Writ by way of authority, or of argument, or of illustration? Did he quote from the original or from the Septuagint, from the parchment-roll or from memory? What are we to say to citations which we cannot find at all in the Old Testament, or to others which are plainly made up of two or more passages, or to others, again, where, from defect of recollection or some other cause, the original words are misquoted? A careful and candid study of these various questions would, we should think, make the inferences which are drawn from the apostle's use of the Jewish Scriptures a little more cautious; while we have some

right to expect at least a statement of opinion in regard to them, before so confident an appeal is made to the evidence which these quotations are supposed to furnish. But with respect to the words of Christ, another and still more difficult series of considerations asks our attention. We no longer have the words of our authority at first hand. To put the question upon even the same level as that of the Pauline quotations, we must suppose the infallible accuracy of the evangelical narrative. Every debate as to the authorship and genuineness of the Gospels—the similarity of the three and the difference of the fourth—the influence of the historian's personality upon the history—the possibility that the disciples may half unconsciously have put their own opinions and prejudices upon the lips of the Lord—rises into view. One of our authors starts back in horror from the supposition that Matthew may have entertained incorrect ideas on the subject of prophecy; but we are afraid that bold sceptics might be found who—all these preliminary questions settled—might deem it not essential to the character even of Christ that he should be infallible on points of Hebrew criticism. We have pushed the argument to its legitimate result: in a work which professes to deal with theological difficulties thoroughly, it ought, whatever its conclusions, to cover all these points. But the theology of the "Aids to Faith" is like the world according to the Indian cosmogony: the earth upon the elephant (we forget the exact order of the mythical beasts), the elephant upon the tortoise, the tortoise upon the serpent, and then the emptiness of arbitrary assumption.

Again, throughout the volume are frequent and somewhat scornful allusions to that "verifying faculty" which has played an important part in this controversy. However numerous and great the sins of the Essayists, none has proved to be greater than the hints which they let drop as to the existence of a criterion of revelation applicable by human intelligence. It is easy to put this doctrine in a form which so offends every prejudice of orthodoxy, as to ensure its instant and angry rejection. Of what use revelation, if man is to decide whether he will accept it or no? What possibility of objective certainty if all truth, even the highest, is to be tried by a subjective standard? How shifting and uncertain the test, and yet how lofty its pretensions! On the one side, "the Word made flesh;" on the other, the mind of man, limited in power at the best, and perpetually darkened by passion, led astray by pride, weakened by prejudice! And thus, without going so far as to assert the absolute incapacity of unassisted human reason to comprehend spiritual truth, or the necessary contrariety of nature and of grace, our authors push home the claims of revelation, and almost succeed in fixing a character of overweening presumption and folly upon the co-ordinate claims of reason. Once more, a statement of fundamen-

tal principles would have given a logical force to the arguments of this volume to which they cannot else pretend. A series of the most important questions in religious philosophy underlie the points which are here so easily assumed,—questions which must be answered if the subsequent procedure of reasoning is to have any power of persuasion at all. There are two factors, present in greater or less degree, in every act or process of revelation—a revealing God and a percipient mind; and revelation is accomplished only by the concurrent activity of both. In proportion as the revelation is mediate or immediate, the respective shares of God and man in the process will be greater or less; when the Infinite Spirit bends down upon the soul of prophet or apostle, the human element may be reduced almost to zero; when a critic, at the distance of many centuries, investigates the records of revelation made to others, and estimates the reality of the fact by the force of purely external evidence, the same element is indefinitely increased. And hence the necessity, here and elsewhere, of a theory as to the proper function of reason in matters of religion. We may be able to shew that the human intellect ought to be confined to the estimate of historical proofs of the *reality* of revelation, while it opens itself in passive receptivity to the *matter* of its teachings; or we may be led to admit the necessity of personal and independent judgment upon the contents as well as the credentials of revelation. But the depths of this great question are not to be glided over on the frail ice of assumption. We have a right to ask, why at this point, and at no other, we are to cry, Halt! to the intellectual faculties which have brought us so far on our way.

With these preliminary remarks, we shall proceed to the estimate and analysis of the several papers of which this volume is composed, believing that thus we shall perform the task entrusted to us in the way most agreeable to our readers. The various essays will, however, engage our attention in a very different degree.

The masterpiece of the whole volume is undoubtedly the first essay, that of Mr. Mansel, "On Miracles as Evidences of Christianity." Without being ready to endorse all its statements and arguments, we are prepared to characterize it as a most thoughtful and in some respects original contribution to a great controversy. Of its style we need say no more than that it is worthy of the matter: it is clear, simple and strong; not muddied by unnecessary and disturbing metaphor, and rising occasionally to a grave and earnest eloquence. The following is the course of Mr. Mansel's argument.

He begins by the statement, that although different believers may differently estimate "the exact position of miracles among the evidences of Christianity," "without prejudice to their common belief," this is not the case when the question relates

"to their reality as facts, and as facts of a supernatural kind." With the miracles, Christianity stands or falls. The veracity of the worker of miracles, whether Christ or an apostle, cannot be reconciled with any natural explanation of the fact. "The most plausible of these natural explanations of miraculous phenomena deals the death-blow to the moral character of the teacher, no less than to the sensible evidence of his mission." But then the miracles "can only be judged in connection with the scheme of which they form a part, and by the light of all the collateral evidence which that scheme is able to furnish." Take them in connection with Christ, with all the circumstances predictive of and attendant upon his public ministry, and the most reasonable course is to accept his own statement of their character and origin. That statement is in itself a testimony to miracles of quite a different kind from any which can be afforded by a mere bystander; and if accepted in regard to one miracle, removes any "special antecedent improbability" which may be supposed to attach to the remainder. While to Christ, and so to the reality of his wonderful works, the whole of his relation to the history of the world bears witness: if they were exceptional, so was he; and each accords with the other.

"It is scarcely necessary to state how much this argument is strengthened when it is addressed to one who believes, no matter on what grounds, in any of the fundamental articles of the Christian Faith. I do not speak of one who believes in the narrative of the Gospels; for to such an one the miracles are not matters of question; but of one who in any sense believes in Christ as the Redeemer of mankind, though doubting some of the records of His earthly life. If God has seen fit to redeem the world by Christ and by Christ alone, what marvel if the history of Christ and of the dispensation preparatory to Christ exhibits signs and wonders such as no other history can claim? The antecedent probability, in this case, is for the miracles, not against them. It is to be expected that an event unique in the world's history should be marked by accompaniments partaking of its own character. The miracles are not every-day events, because the redemption of mankind is not an every-day event; they belong to no cycle in the recurring phenomena of nature, because Christ has not often suffered since the foundation of the world. Round this great fact of man's redemption the accessory features of that wondrous narrative are grouped and clustered as around their proper centre; no longer the uncouth prodigies of the kingdom of Nature, but the fitting splendours of the kingdom of Grace. It was meet that He who came as the conqueror of sin and death, who had power to lay down His life, and power to take it again, should come also as the Lord of Body and the Lord of Spirit, having power over the elements of matter and over the thoughts of men's minds; foretold by predictions which no human wisdom could have suggested, testified to by works which no human power could have accomplished. Viewed as part of the scheme of Redemption, the marvels of the Scripture narrative are no longer isolated and unmeaning anomalies, but a fore-ordained and orderly system of powers, working above the ordinary

course of nature because their end is above the ordinary course of nature. The incongruity, the anomaly, would be if they were not there —if the salvation of the souls of men were to be brought about by no higher means than those which minister to their bodily appetites and material comforts. The daily wants of the individual, or the progressive culture of the race, may be provided for or advanced by laws which work unceasingly from day to day, and from generation to generation; but we seek no recurring law of the Scripture miracles, because we expect no recurrence of that fact to which all Scripture bears witness." Pp. 10, 11.

The real question, Mr. Mansel goes on to say, is as to the *impossibility* of miracles. And this divides itself into two parts; the first of which "relates to the position occupied by miracles with reference to experience and to the empirical laws of matter;" the second, "to their position with reference to philosophical conceptions of God's nature and attributes." Again: "The argument which denies the possibility of miracles on the ground of the uniformity of nature, may be considered under two heads: first, as regards the general conception of a system of natural laws; and secondly, as regards the special experience of the mode in which those laws are manifested." The former may be fairly stated in the words of Hume's celebrated dictum, which, observes Mr. Mansel, "was just as strong or just as weak at the day when it was written as at the present time." If there be any change at all effected by the progress of science, it is in favour of the miraculous theory; inasmuch as the number of unknown causes is perpetually diminishing, without bringing us nearer to the possibility of performing Christ's works. More than this:

"The appearance of a comet, or the fall of an aërolite, may be reduced by the advance of science from a supposed supernatural to a natural occurrence; and this reduction furnishes a reasonable presumption that other phenomena *of a like character* will in time meet with a like explanation. But the reverse is the case with respect to those phenomena which are narrated as having been produced by *personal agency*. In proportion as the science of to-day surpasses that of former generations, so is the improbability that any man could have done in past times, by natural means, works which no skill of the present age is able to imitate. The two classes of phenomena rest in fact on exactly opposite foundations. In order that natural occurrences, taking place without human agency, may wear the appearance of prodigies, it is necessary that the cause and manner of their production should be *unknown;* and every advance of science from the unknown to the known tends to lessen the number of such prodigies by referring them to natural causes, and *increases* the probability of a similar explanation of the remainder. But on the other hand, in order that a man may perform marvellous acts by natural means, it is necessary that the cause and manner of their production should be *known* by the performer; and in this case every fresh advance of science from the unknown to the known *diminishes* the probability that what is unknown now could have been known in a former age."—Pp. 14, 15.

But a miracle is not "a violation of the laws of nature." "It is simply the introduction of a new agent, possessing new powers, and therefore not included under the rules generalized from a previous experience. Its miraculous character .... consists in the fact that the powers in question are supposed to be introduced for a special purpose, and to be withdrawn again when that purpose is accomplished, and thus to be excluded from the field of future observation and investigation." "So far, then, as a miracle is regarded as the operation of a special cause, producing a special effect, it offers no antagonism to that general uniformity of nature, according to which the same effects will always follow from the same causes. The opposition between science and miracle, if any exist, must be sought in another quarter; namely, in the assumption .... that the introduction of a special cause is itself incredible." Such incredibility is sought to be proved by the infinitely nice adjustment of all natural forces, which have been so arranged from the beginning as to render the conception of a disturbing power, proceeding from the original Source of law and order, absolutely impossible. To this, the sufficient answer is the free will of man. "Deny the existence of a free will in man, and neither the possibility of miracles nor any other question of religion or morality is worth contending about. Admit the existence of a free will in man, and we have the experience of a power analogous, however inferior, to that which is supposed to operate in the production of a miracle, and forming the basis of a legitimate argument from the less to the greater." There is "an elasticity, so to speak, in the constitution of nature, which permits the influence of human power on the phenomena of the world to be exercised or suspended at will, without affecting the stability of the whole. We have thus a precedent for allowing the possibility of a similar interference of a higher will on a grander scale." "The fundamental conception which is indispensable to a true apprehension of the nature of a miracle, is that of the distinction of mind from matter; and of the power of the former, as a personal, conscious and free agent, to influence the phenomena of the latter." And Mr. Mansel then proceeds, in the following passage, to draw out the true relation of miracles to natural law:

"If, indeed, we include, under the term *nature*, all that is potential, as well as all that is actual, in the constitution of the world—all that can be brought about in it by divine power, as well as all that is brought about in it by physical causes,—in such an extended sense of the term, a miracle, like any other occurrence, may be included within the province of nature. We may, doubtless, believe that God, from the beginning, so ordered the constitution of the world as to leave room for the exercise of those miraculous powers which He foresaw would at a certain time be exercised; just as He has left similar room for the exercise, within narrower limits, of the human will. In this sense, some of the

scholastic divines maintained, with reason, that a miracle is contrary to nature only in so far as nature is regarded as an active manifestation, not in so far as it is regarded as a passive recipient of power. If this distinction is once clearly understood, the question, whether miracles may be represented as the result of *law*, or not, is a mere verbal question, which is only important from its liability to be mistaken for a real one. Properly speaking, a natural effect is not produced by a law, but by an agent acting according to a law. Every natural phenomenon has its physical cause in some antecedent natural phenomenon which it regularly follows; and the *laws of nature* are merely classifications of some of these sequences with others of a similar character; or, as they have been aptly called, 'the uniformities which exist among natural phenomena, when reduced to their simplest expression.' In this sense, miracles cannot be referred to a natural law, known or unknown; for they do not resemble any sequence of one sensible phenomenon from another; nor can any sensible phenomenon or group of phenomena be pointed out, or even supposed to exist, the occurrence of which would be invariably followed by such results. But if the term *law* be used in a different sense, to denote a method or plan conceived in the mind of an intelligent Being; and if, by referring miracles to a law, no more is meant than that they, like other events, formed part of God's purpose from the beginning, and were the result, not of sudden caprice, but of a preordained plan, by which provision was made for them, that they should be wrought at their proper time and place without disturbing the economy of the universe,—such an expression, allowing for the necessary imperfection of all human terms when applied to divine things, is perhaps the most true and reverent conception of these events which we are capable of forming during this present life; though, like other analogies transferred from the human mind to the Divine, it is the object rather of religious belief than of philosophical speculation."—Pp. 21—23.

The second part of the argument then proceeds to vindicate "the assumption that we are justified in regarding the visible world as under the government of a personal God, and in speaking of His acts and purposes in language which implies an analogy between the Divine mind and the human." And the point upon which Mr. Mansel chiefly and with great force insists is, that the idea of God which we derive from the physical world, is necessarily inadequate and incomplete, and needs both interpretation and correction from the side of our self-knowledge. Mind affords a surer image of God than matter. Our idea of law comes out of our personal consciousness of duty; we discern causation "in the productive energy of the personal will;" our conception of order is due to the notions of unity and totality which we derive from "the immediate perception of the one indivisible Self, and its several means of conscious existence." And we apply to the resolution of the problems of the external world the knowledge which we thus gain by self-inspection.

"Without this action of mind upon its objects, the little world of each man's knowledge would be, not a Cosmos, but a Chaos,—not a system of parts in mutual relation to each other, but an endless succes-

sion of isolated phantoms, coming and going one by one. It is from this little world of our own consciousness, with its many objects, marshalled in their array under the rule of the one conscious Mind, that we are led to the thought of the great universe beyond,—that we conceive this also as a world of Order, and as being such by virtue of its relation to an ordering and presiding Mind. Design, Purpose, Relation, of parts to a whole, of means to an end,—these conceptions, borrowed from the world of mind, can alone give order and unity to the world of matter, by representing it as moulded and governed by a ruling and purposing Mind, the centre and the source of that relation which mind does not take from matter, but confers upon it. Through this alone can Chaos be conceived as Cosmos; through this alone can the Many point to the One."—P. 26.

From this, then, Mr. Mansel draws the following conclusion:

"From the above principles it follows (to use the words of Sir W. Hamilton) 'that the universe is governed not only by physical but by moral laws;' and 'that intelligence stands first in the absolute order of existence—in other words, that final preceded efficient causes.' But this involves, as a consequence, that the question concerning the possibility or probability of a miracle is to be judged, not merely from physical, but also, and principally, from moral grounds; not merely from the evidence furnished by the phenomena of the material world, but also from that furnished by the religious nature of man, and by his relation to a God to whom that nature bears witness. It is altogether an erroneous view to represent the question between general law and special interposition as if it rested on mechanical considerations only,—as if it could be judged by the difference between constructing a machine which, when once made, can go on continuously by its own power, and one which, at successive periods, requires new adjustments. The miracle is not wrought for the sake of the physical universe, but for the sake of the moral beings within it; and the question to be considered is not whether a divine interposition is needed to regulate the machinery of nature, but whether it is needed or adapted to promote the religious welfare of men. If the spiritual restoration of mankind has in any degree been promoted by means of a religion professing to have been introduced by the aid of miracles, and whose whole truth is involved in the truth of that profession, we have a sufficient reason for the miraculous interposition, superior to any that can be urged for or against it from considerations derived from the material world. The very conception of a *revealed* as distinguished from a *natural* religion implies a manifestation of God different in kind from that which is exhibited by the ordinary course of nature; and the question of the probability of a miraculous interposition is simply that of the probability of a revelation being given at all. In the words of Bishop Butler, 'Revelation itself is miraculous, and miracles are the proof of it.'"—Pp. 28, 29.

The concluding part of the essay is occupied with the kindred question as to the value of miracles as evidences of religion. The analysis of the main argument, which we have already given, has extended to so great a length, that we have no room to spare for the steps of Mr. Mansel's proof, "that miracles are employed to prove not the truth of the doctrine, but the autho-

rity of the teacher; and the authority being established, the truth of the doctrine follows from it." To those who are acquainted with the present state of the controversy, this sentence will sufficiently indicate our author's position. And the whole essay is brought to a close in the following eloquent statement of the influence upon scientific culture of the study of the Scriptures:

"To these remarks, which are applicable to every age and race of men to whom the Christian evidences may come, it may perhaps not be inappropriate to add a further observation having a more especial reference to ourselves. The very attacks which have been made, in the supposed interests of science, upon the miraculous element of the Gospel narrative, may themselves serve, if rightly considered, to give to that very element a new significance, and to point to a moral purpose more discernible now than of old. An age of advanced physical knowledge has its especial temptations, no less than its especial privileges. Few indeed, it is trusted, will be found to repeat what one great scientific teacher of the present century has been found to assert, that the heavens declare, not the glory of God, but only the glory of the astronomer. Yet this bold and profane language is only the extreme expression of a tendency against which an age like the present has especial need to watch and pray. Against such a tendency it is no small safeguard that men of science should be trained from their earliest childhood in records which at every page tell of the personal presence of Him by whom all things were made, manifested in direct control over the delegated workings of His visible creation. It is but one form of His perpetual presence with His Church, that in founding a Faith destined to ally itself with the intellectual cultivation of all succeeding generations, He should have founded it in such a manner as to furnish, in the record of its origin, a lesson of the spirit in which that cultivation should be pursued, and a safeguard against the perils to which it is especially exposed. If there are times when the very vastness of the material system which science discloses seems to thrust the Author of all to an almost infinite distance from us;—if there are times when we feel almost tempted to echo the wish of the poet, to be 'a Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,' so that we might but have a clearer sight of the presence of Deity among the phenomena of nature;—if there are times when the heaven that is over our heads seems to be brass, and the earth that is under us to be iron, and we feel our hearts sink within us under the calm pressure of unyielding and unsympathizing Law, as those of the disciples of old sank within them under the stormy violence of wind and wave;—at such times we may learn our lesson and feel our consolation, as we turn to those vivid pictures which our Sacred Story portrays of the personal power of the Incarnate God visibly ruling His creation; and may hear through them the present voice of Him who spake on the waters, 'Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.'"—Pp. 39, 40.

If we seem to our readers to have analyzed Mr. Mansel's contribution to this volume with undue minuteness, it has been because we believe it to possess a permanent philosophical and theological value. There are parts of it to which we might justly have taken exception, especially the passage in which he

endeavours to prove that the evidence in favour of any miracle necessarily removes all from the reach of special criticism; and so not only places all the miracles of the New Testament on the same level of credibility, but lifts those of the Old to a position of equal honour at their side. But we have not wished to chequer by any minute, even if just, criticism, the expression of our deep interest and sincere admiration.

Of the other papers contained in this volume, we shall give some general, and necessarily brief, account on another occasion.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. MAXWELL DAVIDSON.

A BRIEF memoir of the Rev. MAXWELL DAVIDSON, the late highly-esteemed minister of the Unitarian congregation at Wareham, Dorsetshire, will excite interest, especially in those who seek the extension of the great truths of Unitarian Christianity, in the promotion of which in Australia he acted so conspicuous a part. In the future history of that colony, it will be considered no small honour to have been the first to proclaim in its scriptural integrity and simplicity the great truth, that "this is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." Many, we believe, will desire to peruse some memorial of him, to whose zeal, courage and discretion, under Providence, they owe it, that, saved from the deadening influence of unbelief, they are enabled to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences, apart from the slavery of human superstition and human creeds.

The Rev. Maxwell Davidson was born in 1809, in the parish of Killinchy, county Down. He was descended from a class in society which has supplied many ministers of the gospel, his father being a respectable farmer, in the occupation of a farm which had been in the family for four generations. The family was of Scotch extraction, and had settled in Ireland in 1641. The name of his mother (who also was Scotch) was Douglas. He received his school education under the Rev. Thomas Read, of Killinchy, a superior classical scholar, who had been educated at an academy under the late Dr. Moses Nelson, and his son, the Rev. Thomas Nelson. He went to the college department of the Royal Belfast Institution in 1828, where, after passing through the course with credit, he received, in 1831, the general certificate, which is equivalent to a degree in Arts. Leaving college for a time, he occupied for four years the situation of resident and general assistant in a most respectable boarding academy at Crumlin; and as the venerable Principal, the Rev. Nathaniel Alexander, was then advanced in years and exceedingly infirm, the whole responsibility of the tuition and superin-

tendence generally devolved on Mr. Davidson. On his return to the Belfast Institution for the completion of his theological course, he was engaged for a year as a resident and chief assistant in Dr. Montgomery's boarding and day school at Belfast, where he acquitted himself with much fidelity and success. Being brought up as a Calvinistic Presbyterian under an orthodox presbytery, he studied theology in 1837 at Belfast under Dr. Hanna, a Trinitarian. In the pursuit of his theological researches, he saw reason to give up the religious views in which he had been educated, and at a time when he had much promise of popularity and pecuniary emolument in connection with the Calvinistic Presbyterians, joined the Unitarians. He was licensed to preach the gospel by the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor, Aug. 15, 1839. A letter from the well-known and respected Rev. Fletcher Blakely to the Rev. Robert Aspland, in which Mr. Davidson is described as "of excellent attainments and exemplary conduct, a good classical scholar, and a distinguished student of the Belfast College for five full sessions," was the means of introducing him as a preacher and tutor into England. He also received high testimonials of character and attainments from his revered friend, Dr. Montgomery.

His first engagement was as tutor, Sept. 1839, in the family of Abraham Clarke, Esq., of Newport, in the Isle of Wight, where he remained for four years, discharging the duties of his office with singular fidelity, and storing his mind with a variety of useful knowledge, for which the situation afforded him some considerable advantages. He was ever willing to give assistance in the pulpit to his attached friend, the pastor of the Unitarian society in that town, and to the Rev. H. Hawkes, of Portsmouth, by both of whom and by many members of their congregations he was highly esteemed. Being desirous of entering more fully on the duties of the ministry, he accepted an engagement for some months with the congregation at Billingshurst, Sussex, from which he removed to take charge of the congregation at Mead Row, Godalming, as successor to the Rev. Edwin Chapman. Residing at the neighbouring town of Guildford, he united the office of schoolmaster and pastor. In many respects the habits of his early home life rendered this situation peculiarly agreeable to him, many of his congregation consisting of intelligent farmers, into whose pursuits his former acquaintance with agriculture enabled him so well to enter, and he had at all times a strong relish for the beauties of natural scenery, which abound in that neighbourhood. He was very successful in sustaining the Sunday-school at Mead Row, and in attaching to himself and to his ministry the young men of the congregation. He was exceedingly useful as well as beloved in this pastorship; but after six years' ministry, having received through the medium of the Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association an

offer to become tutor in the family of John Duerdin, Esq., of Melbourne, Australia, with the prospect (if circumstances should admit) of conducting worship in that locality, he resolved to embrace it.

His congregation deeply felt his departure, and passed, among others, the following resolution: "That it is with sincere and earnest regret that we receive the announcement of the resignation of the Rev. Maxwell Davidson of the pastorship of this congregation; and we desire to thank him most emphatically for his zealous exertions in behalf of this church and all its connected institutions during the six years of his ministry among us, and also for the many and various advantages we have derived from his friendly intercourse among our several families, and to assure him of our heartfelt desires for his happiness and success in the new world he has chosen for his temporary abode."

He arrived at Melbourne in November, 1851, and was cordially received by John Duerdin, Esq. The circumstances of the place at his first arrival did not augur well for the establishment of Unitarian worship. The mania for gold-digging was then at its height, and the public mind was too much absorbed to give earnest attention to the support of a purer faith than that to which it had long been accustomed. That this was a season to Mr. Davidson of great mental anxiety and earnest deliberation as to the time for the commencement of the attempt to open Unitarian worship, the writer of this memoir has strong evidence in letters addressed to himself at this period. But at length the die was cast; the attempt, with the blessing of God, was to be made. An advertisement was issued requesting persons favourably disposed to Unitarianism to meet in the Mechanics' Institution for mutual recognition and consultation; and, much to his delight and that of the few stanch friends who had encouraged the undertaking, a sufficient number assembled to render the project of commencing public worship highly desirable and encouraging. Eight gentlemen, with Mr. Davidson, allowed themselves to be the referees to persons desirous of establishing Unitarian worship, whose names deserve to be gratefully remembered as founders of the Unitarian church at Melbourne. These were, Alexander Wilson, John Duerdin, John Stevenson, A. Campbell Brown, William Stevenson, W. A. C. A'Beckett, Henry Montgomery, William Small, and Thomas C. Bateman, Hon. Sec. The Rev. M. Davidson was chosen their minister, but he generously declined to receive any emolument till their church was organized and an edifice erected.

The little band of disciples met for the first time to worship in the Mechanics' Institution on Jan. 30, 1853. It was an eventful day. Mr. Davidson, in a letter to the writer, published in the Inquirer, Vol. xi. p. 380, describes the congregation as consisting of about forty or fifty families. The opening prayer and

the sermon on the occasion, on the Unity of God, from Matt. xii. 22, 23, were published. The sermon contains passages which merit quotation. His spirit seemed to have fully grasped the reality that the knowledge of his God and communion with Him are, to use his own words, man's "noblest, most excellent culture" (p. 4), that *only* mental elevation which "raises hopes beyond time, chance and the grave" (p. 5). The spirit of his prayer and of his sermon will point to the conception that he yearned to feel more entirely that devotion, religion, is the foundation of all future good, "the beautifier, the civilizer, the ennobler of the whole life of man" (p. 22). He continues—Religion, "is the bond that keeps him joined to a Being of infinite power, wisdom and goodness. It is the communication between our finite spirit and the Infinite Spirit. Therefore, while that communication is kept open, wisdom and power are ever coming from God to man. Holier, juster, truer, does the sincere worshiper walk from day to day. Steadier, firmer, does he proceed amid the trials and temptations of this probationary scene. It keeps the soul in all its qualities ever young. There is no old age to the mind closely joined to God, for all his immortal, ever-living properties are in some degree received by the sincere religious heart." Towards the close he sums up: "You must lay the groundwork of your present and everlasting happiness in your own soul, by loving first the Supreme Good with all your heart and strength and mind. When you have done *that*—when you are fixed and immovable there—then get wealth, and it will be a blessing to you; it will be all gilded over with the bounty of God. The gold and the silver, instead of being darkened in your worldly, worn-out mind with Satanic dark hues, will shine clearer and brighter than they really are, when they reflect the splendour of God's blessing" (p. 27).

After the auspicious gathering for worship in the Mechanics' Institute, the best spirit prevailed in the little flock. It was resolved to erect a place of worship, and a liberal subscription was forthwith commenced. The arguments which led to this course are well stated in the address on laying the foundation-stone of the church, and much Christian influence imparted in two published discourses preached the Sunday before and the Sunday after that interesting event. We think the reader will be gratified with a few extracts. In the first discourse, speaking of the object of public worship, the preacher observes:

"The hymn, the prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, are to suggest the purity, the benevolence, the justice, the moral excellence of God, to our minds. It is true, the service may be a languid and feeble one, and the worshiper may have neither a strong mind nor a strong religious sense, yet rarely will he attend public worship without having some of his higher faculties moved. If he be induced to think of God in the least degree, that thought cannot enter without dispersing some dark

shades of malice, or cruelty, or selfishness. The abode of that idea only a short time in the mind must purify it to some extent. The conscience will be made somewhat more sensitive and clearer by its residence." P. 7.

Mr. Davidson's address at the laying of the foundation-stone was peculiarly appropriate. After a suitable introduction, he says:

"It is proposed that here should be taught a morality and a piety as near as human weakness will permit to that taught by our Saviour, Jesus Christ. No written creeds, no mysterious confessions, will be exacted of those coming to worship here. The Bible and the Bible alone will be the only standard of faith and practice. We think that therein is contained everything necessary to salvation. We think also that the Old and New Testament give not only the highest and best revelation ever vouchsafed to man, but that their pages, when generously interpreted, communicate a religion in consonance with the highest intellectual culture, and beautifully adapted to the highest moral elevation of the race.

"This place of worship is not intended for a house of controversy, where every one that enters may expect to hear denunciations of every one's belief but his own. It is not designed as a place where nothing is heard but our *denial* of certain doctrines, where nothing is heard but *negations*. We purpose quite the contrary. We may deem it a conscientious duty to declare sometimes in what points we consider other divisions of the Christian church to have departed from what we regard as the simplicity of the gospel. But we hope that these occasions will be exceptions. We consider that our views of God and Christ and duty and accountability, afford the finest field for positive teaching.

"We have not to defend any doctrine opposed to sound and unprejudiced reason. We have no metaphysical subtleties to explain, at which 'reason stands aghast, and faith itself is half confounded.' We have only to walk right on, with the Bible in our hands, teaching us that we are all over-canopied by a Being of infinite wisdom, power and goodness, —that Jesus of Nazareth 'is the way, the truth and the life,' that lead to Him. We believe that our views of the Divine government are so natural, so simple, so scriptural, that 'those who run may read.' We believe our own interpretation of Christianity to be the most excellent, to be the most correct; but we do not lay claim to any infallibility. Our religion does not sanction intolerance. If we ever are intolerant, we are transgressing our own principles. We do think our principles and doctrines all beautiful, scriptural, and admirably adapted to promote the present and eternal happiness of man. We consider our views of Christianity, from their simplicity and freedom from mystery, from their being expressed everywhere in the language of scripture, as eminently adapted to men of good sense whose occupations have not afforded them much time for study. We think they are adapted well to them; and we think that the system of interpretation which had the decided approbation of Milton, Newton, Locke, the celebrated Lardner, Priestley and Dr. Channing, must be fitted to meet the wants of the human soul in its most cultivated state,—that it must be well suited to satisfy all those hopes of eternal life which these men so invincibly

held. We do believe that they are calculated to make men truly happy, truly benevolent, truly honourable and honoured in this world; and to give them such deeply-grounded faith in Christ and in God,—such a solid, scriptural and rational hope of glory, honour and immortality in another world, that no poverty, no disappointment, no bodily suffering, no blighted hopes, not even death itself, will ever shake.

"These, then, are my convictions of what our religious views are, and what they are capable of doing for man. But as this is the first house attempted to be erected in this colony or these colonies for the worship of One God, the Father, through Jesus Christ, allow me on this, to us, most solemn occasion, one word of warning. I warn those who have been in the habit of attending Unitarian places of worship, and those who may join us now, that these views of God, of duty, of man and his destiny, however beautiful, true, scriptural and excellent they may appear, can do nothing for them held as a mere theory; that if they expect from them any of the natural and legitimate effects and advantages I have mentioned, without the public or private exercise of religion, they will be grievously disappointed. Without attention to moral and religious discipline, I do believe they will find the whole moral and religious tone of their minds sink. One by one, will their better dispositions fade away. Their benevolence, their purity, their philanthropy, their reverence for God, will all begin to wane, and the result will be moral and religious death.

"Such conduct will only end with disgrace to themselves and disgrace to the principles they have professed. They will have done their part to retard for a while the diffusion of pure and undefiled religion. Other men of stronger wills, of more single aims and deeper religious power, will rise to do the work. Our principles and doctrines, then, are all excellent, all beautiful, all scriptural. We have only one course to pursue—to prove them so to all the world, by a zealous attention to every means which will serve to deepen the conviction of them in our own hearts, which will allow these doctrines to have their fair and legitimate influence on our whole walk and conversation. Without this, they will be only 'as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.' With a generous, reasonable and steady culture, I believe they will confer on us all the happiness on earth that the most excellent minds ever desired, and that they will bring us to a glory in a future life, 'which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.'"—P. 14.

His sermon preached the Sunday after laying the foundation-stone of the church was equal to the occasion, and was well adapted to impress his hearers with the value of a high-toned practical religion. It was from Matt. v. 16, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." He forcibly observes:

"There is not one of us whose conduct will not in some degree retard or further the diffusion of our doctrines. There is not a personal virtue nor a social virtue but will be agents in promulgating and establishing our faith. Patriotism, philanthropy, benevolence, civility, courteousness—all serve to recommend it; and we need not say that temperance, truthfulness, holiness and justice, are the only tests of its worth or truth.

No wealth, no social position, no power of preaching, can do anything *without* these. These are the *missionaries* which no bigotry, no worldly interest, no ignorance, can long resist. So much of these as we possess, just so far and no farther can we go. If you could measure or calculate the height and depth and breadth of these qualities in our hearts, you could tell even *now* the whole extent of our influence for years to come.

"We are, then, peculiarly called upon to walk worthily of our high vocation. It has been for many years my firm conviction that it only requires a consistently religious and moral life in its professors to make our religious views almost universal. I have had a wide and long acquaintance with orthodox men and orthodox writers. I believe there are few of the more intelligent who dare trust themselves to read Channing or Dewey. The confusion of three Persons, all infinite, being one,—the monstrous idea of God dying on the cross,—the entire absence of such an idea as a triune God, not only from the pages of the Old Testament, but from the mind of every Hebrew who read it from the time of Abraham till the time of Paul,—these points, when they do allow their minds to think on them, cause great perplexity. If they had not a large traditionary literature of the darker ages as well as the modern creeds to refer to, they could never retain them. The march of intellect would most undoubtedly sweep them all away. But there is one reason which makes them cling to these tenements, however frail, however unsightly. They are afraid, if they permit the unintelligible but revered mysteries to go, all religion, all morality, will go with them. They are waiting to see if Unitarianism can produce a pure morality and a fervent piety. If it could do that, they would not hold their contradictory creeds for a day. Now I do believe that this is the state of mind of a most influential number in almost all the churches around us.

"All the best men of all churches have a large share of moral and religious life; and rather than see the existence and culture of these sink, they would join any society, albeit it might hold some views which seemed to them irrational. They can neither live nor die without religion. If they cannot get it in a lovely, rational form, they must adhere to it in a more deformed aspect.

"Your lives, then, will be as much inquired into as your doctrines. The question will be asked, Have your views of Christianity power to make their professors assemble together every Sunday in order that they may hear them, in order that all the virtues they enjoin may be more deeply engraved on their minds?

"I know there are individuals who say, that if a man live a good moral life, there is no occasion for piety, for devotion, for religious exercises, either public or private. I think this a fatal error; because I do not believe that morality *will* remain strong and pure and active in the mind of him who forgets God and neglects his worship. Religion and piety are the links that hold man to the great spiritual fountain, God. Break those bonds, and he wanders forth without any communication between him and the Source of all life. To expect him then to manifest philanthropy, kindness, truthfulness, is to expect the river to flow on when its source is dried up."—Pp. 29—31.

In the conclusion of this discourse, Mr. Davidson's own fervid sense of the value of the gospel and his devotional spirit strikingly appear:

"The light here mentioned in our text by our Saviour, is a light that

was to come from those illumined by the spirit and precepts of the gospel. If his word abode in them, they would bring forth much fruit. It is from Christ, from his example, from his depth of spiritual power, that a similar power must be excited in us. He has 'the words of eternal life.' If you leave him for superstition and creeds, if you leave him for the wide wastes of infidel philosophy, you will miss your aim of that 'perfect man' which is formed 'by Christ Jesus.' You cannot sincerely embrace any doctrine without its consequences. In infidelity the soul has no anchor to cling to when tempests arise. The unbeliever has no standard of human perfection, like Christ, to follow, nor has he any standard of morality, like the parables or the Sermon on the Mount, to flee to in the days of despair, affliction and death. He has to wander over an illimitable desert without a star to guide him. The language of Christ is consoling, true and simple. It opens up infinite hopes; it keeps you calm and steady under the wings of Almighty power and goodness. If you leave that rock, you will never again find rest for the soles of your feet.

"This restless scepticism may most justly be compared to a man making a long journey through an unknown, rough, entangled country. He applies to every guide, has confidence in none—follows each one a short time, and often in contrary directions—so that his whole power and strength are wasted away before he reaches his destination. But the sincere follower of Christ has no windings to make. He is never led out of the straight path.

'Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
He is surrounded still with God.'

"In obedience to the morality of Jesus, light rises all around you. His teachings touch all the moral and religious well-springs in your soul. These well-springs, then, are now the enjoyment and the beginning of that kingdom of heaven which is to have no end."

The church in which Mr. Davidson was so deeply interested was built for £4346. 7*s*. 6*d*. on land given by the Government. An additional quarter of an acre was afterwards obtained for a minister's dwelling and school-house. A portion of the ground of the new cemetery was also appropriated to the Unitarians.

At the first annual meeting of the Melbourne Unitarian congregation, the following address was made to Mr. Davidson:

"Melbourne, April 18, 1854.

"Dear Sir,—Upon this the first annual meeting of our society within the place of worship erected for the service of Unitarian Christianity, we feel that it is but right to offer our sincere congratulations upon the result of the last twelve months' proceedings, terminating as they do this day in our possessing a church wherein, it is hoped, the sound principles characterizing our holy religion will ever be inculcated.

"To you, as a minister of this denomination of Christians, it cannot be other than a source of deep consolation to find that there have not been wanting those who could so far appreciate the unspeakable worth of the truths which the gospel reveals, as to induce them, amidst much difficulty and anxiety, to prosecute their efforts in raising the building now dedicated to the celebration of Unitarian worship.

"In expressing our sense of the benefits derived and comfort felt from your ministerial offices since the establishment of the congregation, we

have at the same time to request your acceptance of the accompanying mark of our respect and esteem.* We would also thank you for the solicitude you have evinced to familiarize us with the precepts and teachings of the Great Head of this and all other churches. We trust that we may ever be sensible of the value of the privileges we enjoy; and in gratefully acknowledging the goodness of Almighty God in thus highly favouring us, we pray that His blessing may rest upon your labours, and that you may prove truly efficacious and influential in promoting the permanent happiness of many of your brethren in this community. We are, dear sir, your faithful friends. For, and on behalf of the members of the congregation,

"George W. Selby."

Thus was Mr. Davidson, by the force of his character, his prudence, temper, zeal and piety, under the Divine blessing, the founder of the first Unitarian church in Australia, supported by a considerable share of the intelligence and respectability of Melbourne, numbering among his hearers Sir Wm. A'Becket, the Chief Justice of the colony, and gaining for itself the consideration of the other religious bodies of the town, as manifested by the respectful manner in which the press recorded the congregational proceedings. The establishment of this congregation was of great importance also as lending the advantage of its example to other towns in Australia for the commencement in them of Unitarian worship, as was evident in the successive establishment of the Unitarian congregations of Sydney and Adelaide,—Sydney, under the pastorship of the Rev. G. H. Stanley, formerly of Huddersfield; Adelaide, under the Rev. J. C. Woods, formerly of Newport, Isle of Wight.

Mr. Davidson married in January, 1854, Miss Willis, a lady who had been governess for three years in the family of Lady Emily Harding, of Stapleton Rectory, near Shrewsbury, and afterwards in that of the Earl of Denbigh; but failing health had obliged her to relinquish for a time the arduous duties of a teacher, and a change to Australia was arranged as a means of securing a long sea-voyage, with a view to recruit her health. On her passage she had become a Unitarian from the perusal of the Memoir of Dr. Channing, lent her by the surgeon of the ship; and on reaching Melbourne she gladly made an engagement in the family of John Duerdin, Esq., where she hoped to become acquainted with Unitarian literature. Soon after Mr. Davidson's arrival in the colony, which was about nine months subsequent to her own, she established a select boarding-school in the suburbs of Melbourne, receiving pupils at £100 a year; but her pupils all deserted her shortly after her marriage with a professed Unitarian minister. From her practical acquaintance with the Unitarian controversy and large mental acquisitions, she was well qualified to be an able as well as zealous co-operator in the work of the ministry. The attendance at the chapel was then

* A purse of 200 sovereigns.

numerous and respectable. During the time that divine service was held in the Mechanics' Institute, Mr. Davidson was filling the office of tutor to Mr. Duerdin; but on that gentleman's return to England, and after his own marriage, Mr. Davidson's whole time was devoted to the interests of his church. His heart became more deeply impressed with the value of religious truth, as experience led him to feel its vast importance to the welfare of the community. He had, as a minister to a congregation composed of persons from all quarters of the globe, a considerable share of the anxieties which ever attend a faithful minister's pastorate. The following letter, though not intended to meet the public eye, will, as the matured thoughts of a valued minister passed to his reward, be read with interest. It also affords hints which may be useful to others similarly circumstanced, at the same time giving a glimpse of colonial life.

"Melbourne, Sept. 25, 1856.

"My dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge yours, dated June 11, 1856, and to return you my grateful thanks for the long and continued interest you have taken in my life and movements. My style of preaching is considerably changed since I left England. I mention this, as you allude in your letter to the kind of sermon which you now and have for years considered best for a congregation. I entirely agree with you on that point. There are very many of my sermons which I may have thought very excellent at the time, and which this individual or that individual praised, but which I could not now read with satisfaction to any audience. On this subject my views are radically altered. You well know that I lost my *right hand* when I lost the late Alexander Wilson. His death left me without a single individual who had had the least experience in conducting a Unitarian congregation; and scarcely one who took part in our affairs had ever much attended a Unitarian place of worship. Now you can fancy my position in the midst of the strongest Calvinistic and Roman Catholic population—aye, and what is more detrimental and more injurious, a very large amount of proclaimed atheism and great indifference. There are far more declared, open atheists here than in England, and a vast deal of undefined infidelity hanging on our borders and insinuating itself into families of our society. Several families of influence that were called Unitarian, I believe were deistical or infidel. My preaching, I trust, is fast doing away with any doubts that the orthodox ever had as to our being *Christian*. They are now hinting and wishing to make it appear that the congregation are not so high in their views as I am. Some of them, no doubt, are not. You see I have enough to do, with Trinitarians on one side and Infidelity on another. I have learned one lesson, or at least I am learning it, that one of the great reasons why Unitarians are called infidels, why the orthodox deny to them the Christian name, is, that persons *do* claim the Unitarian name, *do* join our churches, who are not Christian, shewing in their conversation their repudiation of miracle, even of the resurrection, and of the whole leading doctrines of the Christian scheme. It is these who obtain for us the name of infidels. No minister who really believes in Unitarian Christianity will be denied the name of Christian, unless for a time, in

ignorance of his views; nor do I think any congregation will. I think the concession of the title very much depends on whether they are really Unitarians as they profess themselves. A strange, undefined set come out here, from Scotland and America and Germany. You have some idea, then, of my situation. One very great drawback is, that I have no layman well read in our theology, who could aid me in a controversy, or who is alive to these double influences of superstition on one side and rank infidelity on the other. Many of my congregation cannot see why I should be afraid of these things. Indeed, so little do they know of the state of religious opinion, that about a year ago some of them applied to me to allow a Rev. G. S. to preach for me, who, whatever may be his real opinions, is considered now by many as an Atheist or Socialist. He was once a missionary in the North of England for the Rev. George Harris, but soon professed himself anything or everything but a Unitarian. You remember he joined the Unitarians some eight or nine years ago, and then came to London to John Chapman's business. Whilst there, he was chairman for Holyoake. Well, one of my committee was much enraged at my intolerance, and left the church. Since that time, the walls of Melbourne are covered all over with placards regarding this Mr. S. and his Atheism and Socialism, so that my people *now* are of opinion that I saved them from the ill fame of Socialism or Atheism being admitted into our pulpit. Now I do not mean to say that Mr. S. is a Socialist or an Atheist; but I have heard that the Rev. George Harris considered him as verging on Atheism. But whatever may have been his real views, it could not be prudent for us to admit a man whom the world regarded in this light, especially as our cause has been so lately planted. At the time I refused him admittance to my pulpit he was unknown in Melbourne.

"If Christianity continue to be the religion of the people of these colonies, if it continue to bind the great majority as God's revelation, I believe that the Trinity will lose its hold, and that Unitarianism will be the religion of the land. But if infidelity and indifference seize upon all who reject the Trinity, then these countries will become infidel, and the professors of Christianity will be confined to a few, and it will be *only* a profession.

"Thus you see it is difficult to predict our future. But we have to *do our duty* 'in our day and generation.' I wish we had another station here—a minister placed at Geelong as well as Melbourne.

"I have had a little skirmish in one of the local papers. At our congregational tea-party I laid claim to the theology of Mr. Caird's Sermon, and there was a layman there who claimed it for orthodoxy. He was so indignant about our beloved Queen! It caused some inquiry, and I preached a sermon on our principles, which, being advertised, drew a great number of Trinitarians to hear.

"I was very much obliged for the notice you took of me and my congregation at your meeting of the Southern Unitarian Fund Society. I feel very grateful for the kindness I always received from the people of Portsmouth and the Southern congregations; and I always think that, if I ever return home a rich man, I shall take up my abode in their quarter of the world. Please give my most respectful and kindest remembrance to Mrs. Kell and all your family.

"Yours very sincerely and obliged,

"Rev. E. Kell." MAXWELL DAVIDSON."

Mrs. Alexander Wilson, now of Highbury,—the widow of Mr. Davidson's very attached friend at Melbourne,—thus writes of him:

"He was always a kind, generous friend to both poor and rich, and would do all or anything he could for any one. Certainly he was no bigot, and one of the most warm-hearted beings that ever lived, and one who, with all proper pride, never let it come in the way of his Christian duty or kindliness. He was generous to a degree; and if any of his poor congregation went to ask him to purchase or to give anything, he would always, whether convenient or not, give or buy. I think I may say that, if not liked for his religious principles, he was generally respected in Melbourne, even by his opposing party I mean, and I know at one time, his sermons were regarded as some of the best in Melbourne; for he was considered a well-educated man—up to the mark; and while I was there, he often brought into his discourses something with regard to the then present times of what was constantly passing around us, which seemed to be turned to great service, and gave much pleasure to his congregation."

Mr. Davidson left Melbourne for England, Sept., 1857, having resigned his pastoral office in the previous May. Several reasons conspired to make him desirous of returning to England. In a letter to the writer, dated May 20, 1857, he says:

"I have some time thought there ought to be a change of minister. Five or six years without ever having a minister to preach for you or to speak to, is very wearying to the preacher and monotonous to the hearer. There are very great changes going on in the political affairs of the colony. It is likely to become a pure democracy, and hence a large sympathy with Yankee opinions."

Another reason for leaving Melbourne, which we may now consider as foreshadowing the future, is thus mentioned:

"My health is never very good in the immediate neighbourhood of Melbourne, but is very well in the country, especially near the sea. I seem to require sea air more than anything else. Could you not obtain for me one of your livings near the sea, with a small piece of land? Colonial people are restless and changeable. They have changed their own country and climate, and all old associations, and they never again rest like the old country people. Towns like Melbourne and San Francisco are peculiarly changeable. The congregation has had three ministers in San Francisco since I came here. The bringing out of ministers from Boston has cost them perhaps nearly £1000."

On Mr. Davidson's arrival in England, Dec. 30, 1857, he spent six months in visiting his friends. It was a circumstance most agreeable to his wishes that the congregation at Wareham, in the district in which he most wished to settle, being then, on the resignation of the Rev. D. Griffith, without a minister, sent him a unanimous invitation. In his new charge he devoted himself to every claim upon him with the same fidelity as at Melbourne. The respectable and intelligent congregation of Wareham appreciated his services as a preacher, and esteemed him as

a friend, and the evening congregation was increasing. Their largest congregational tea-party took place at the Town Hall during his ministry. He had also good prospects in his private school. His anticipations of the quiet comfort for which he had yearned, and of ministerial usefulness, must have been in every way satisfactory. His brother ministers in the south, who met him at their annual ministerial gathering at Ringwood in September last, cannot but look back with peculiar though saddened interest, while they call to mind the warm greetings of his friendly spirit, and the animated part he took in their discussion as to the best mode of celebrating the bi-centenary of 1662. Little thought they that ere that time arrived he should be taken from them! He was a man of a genial and affectionate disposition, and his conversation was remarkable for freshness as well as purity of thought. Such meetings were peculiarly congenial to his heart, and to them he always contributed increased vivacity. His sterling integrity, his unaffected piety and benevolence, endeared him to all. But it was the will of Him who is all-wise that he should be removed from this scene of labour and translated to a nobler sphere. Symptoms of serious illness from an affection of the heart manifested themselves about a month before his final seizure. He was for some weeks unable, without inconvenience, to walk upstairs, but continued to pursue his usual duties, and preached twice on the Sunday only two days before his almost sudden death, Nov. 19, 1861, at the age of 52. He was buried in the same grave with the Rev. John Edwards, formerly the eloquent minister of the New meeting-house, Birmingham—the successor of Dr. Priestley—who was drowned while bathing in the river three miles below Wareham, in 1808.* He was followed to his last earthly resting-place by the Rev. L. Lewis, of London, and the neighbouring Unitarian ministers. Touching proof of the warm esteem in which he was held was manifested by ladies and gentlemen—indeed by his whole congregation, from the highest to the lowest, of both sexes—joining in the mourning train. The Rev. L. Lewis preached the funeral sermon to his sorrowing people, and paid a suitable tribute to his memory. He has left an affectionate widow and two young children to lament their heavy loss,—a loss which will be painfully felt by all who enjoyed the benefit of his friendship.

> "His memory long will live alone
> In all our hearts, as mournful light
> That broods above the fallen sun
> And dwells in heaven half the night."†

EDMUND KELL.

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* See his memoir, by the Rev. J. Kentish, Monthly Repos., Vol. III. p. 693.

† Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

SOME ACCOUNT OF DR. HENRY SAMPSON, ONE OF THE CLERGY EJECTED AT THE RESTORATION.*

Among the lesser worthies who in the seventeenth century did homage to conscience and religious truth by a costly Nonconformity, Dr. Sampson well deserves a place. To his industry we owe, as will be hereafter stated, a portion of our present knowledge respecting the ejected clergy.

Henry Sampson, descended from religious parents, was born at South Leverton in or about the year 1629. There are two villages of that name in the county of Nottingham, a few miles from East Retford. In the more southern village there were in the early part of the seventeenth century three owners of land of the name of Sampson,—Thomas, Henry and William. William was the father of Henry Sampson, of whom we desire now to speak. The biographers speak of his being a nephew of John Vicars, the learned orientalist, author of the Decapla in Psalmos, published in 1639, a work which extorted high praise from Anthony Wood, who commends the author as "a most admirable linguist, and the best for the oriental tongues in his time." It is probable, therefore, that the mother of Henry Sampson belonged by birth to the respectable and religious family of Vicars. William, a younger brother of Henry, was born about 1636. What other members there were we are not informed. The heir of William was Sampson King. He might be the son of a sister of Henry and William Sampson. They had the misfortune to lose their father at a very early period, probably soon after the birth of the younger. Their mother contracted a second marriage with the celebrated Presbyterian divine, Dr. Obadiah Grew, minister of St. Michael's, Coventry. This circumstance exercised considerable influence on the destiny of Henry Sampson. His stepfather was a calm and sedate divine, of retired habits, but able in the pulpit, and fearless in pursuing the path of right and conscience. Several anecdotes are told of his firmness and high courage. That he could be generous, too, and was a true gentleman, appears from his treatment of a neighbouring clergyman of the Cavalier party. Mr. Panton, compelled in the time of the war to sell his library, found a purchaser of some of the books in Dr. Grew. When brighter days for the Royalist side returned, he expressed a wish to re-purchase the books possessed by Dr. Grew. They were at once returned; but, as the Dr. was the richer man, he declined to receive any payment. When the Act of Uniformity was passed, his diocesan, Bishop Hacket, entreated Dr. Grew, but in vain, to retain

* A brief but spirited sketch of his life appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1851. In that and a subsequent No. of the Magazine, some extracts were printed from Sampson's MSS.

his living. He was afterwards a sufferer for his Nonconformity, and lay for six months in the jail whence Lawrence Saunders, one of the Marian martyrs, had gone forth to his death.

There was a second family, born at Coventry, as a son and daughter are mentioned: the latter became the wife of an ejected divine, Mr. Willis; the former is known as Dr. Nehemiah Grew, a physician and writer on medical and philosophical subjects. The half-brothers were friends to the close of life; and it is remarkable that both followed the same profession, both practised in London; and when the elder died, the other paid a warm and graceful tribute to his virtues. This and other circumstances warrant the belief that the common home of the two families was happy and prosperous till religious persecution marred its peace and comfort.

The various personal and family ties which bound Henry Sampson to Puritanism were confirmed by his education. Of his school history at Coventry no account has reached us. At the age of fifteen (according to Dr. Grew), Henry Sampson became a pupil of Mr. William Moses, afterwards Master of Pembroke Hall, and one of the ejected. He went to Cambridge well prepared, if his epitaph speaks truly, for university studies *(Coventriæ bonis literis et linguis institutus)*. The books of Pembroke Hall* give the date 1646 as that of his entrance there. He was then seventeen years of age. The ancient and religious house at which Sampson studied drew from Fuller the eulogium, that it might be "compared with any foundation in Europe not exceeding it in bigness, time and number of members," and it would "acquit itself not conquered in all learned and liberal capacities." It has honoured names among its alumni, —Spencer, Grindal, Lancelot Andrews,—and no less than three of the Marian martyrs,—Rogers, Ridley and Bradford. The Masters of Pembroke Hall during Sampson's residence in the university were probably Richard Vines and Sydrach Simpson, both men of eminence, the former among the Presbyterians, the latter among the Independents. Vines was reputed a "Luther" among the preachers of his time. To him and the other Masters of Colleges at Cambridge, Parliament addressed, in 1645-6, an ordinance to secure "constant good preaching" in the university, which it declared to "concern the welfare both of the church and the kingdom." When such men as Spurstowe, Whichcott, Cudworth and Vines, were amongst the heads of Colleges, the standard of university preaching must have been high.

Sampson's academic career was in every respect successful. He took his Bachelor's degree in 1649-50, was elected a Fellow

* This and some other information we owe to Mr. Mayer, of St. John's College, the able author of several biographical and historical works relating to Cambridge in the seventeenth century. We have also to record a similar obligation to Mr. Joshua Wilson, of Tunbridge Wells.

in 1650, and proceeded to his Master's degree in 1653. Of his college studies and acquirements we have an account in the words of his friend and pastor, the celebrated John Howe. After describing his early and decided religious tastes and habits, and his deliberate adoption of the ministerial office, he observes: "And therefore, though in his academical studies, wherein he spent several years, he neglected no part of that rational learning which was most fitly conducing and serviceable to this purpose, yet he most earnestly applied himself to the gaining a thorough acquaintance with those languages wherein the Holy Scriptures were originally written, and spared no cost to procure a great variety of the best and most celebrated editions of both the Testaments, with other helps for the attaining of that most necessary knowledge, whereof his library, so richly furnished on that head, did appear after his decease their full evidence."*

It was during Sampson's college days that the "Engagement," a political test ascribed to the Independents, was imposed. It bound every one taking it to be true and faithful to the Commonwealth as then established, without King or Lords. This oath was sorely against the grain of the Presbyterians, and many of them honestly refused it. There were not wanting some who, recognizing the government as one *de facto*, were willing to tender a conditional allegiance, binding themselves, as they imagined, only negatively—so long only as no power hostile to the existing government appeared. Samuel Dillingham, writing to his friend Sancroft from Emmanuel College at this time of trial to men's consciences, and spurning with a noble contempt some of the equivocations and apologies for subscription in a *non-natural* sense, said: "If this be the doctrine of Protestants to subscribe equivocally and with reserves quite besides the main intention of the instrument, which is clear enough to all, I will turn Jesuit; for I never can believe it lawful; it is a mere delusion and a lie."†

Sampson, we must conclude, took the Engagement, as he was about that time elected Fellow of his college His fellowship led to his early promotion to a benefice. But before we follow him from Cambridge to a living, it is worth while recording that amongst his associates at Pembroke Hall were several who afterwards shared his honest Nonconformity. Abraham Clifford, elected Fellow at the same time and afterwards ejected, studied and practised medicine. Thomas Parsons, also a Fellow, was ejected from St. Michael's, Wood Street, London; and Daniel Manning, another Fellow, was afterwards ejected from Enfield,

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* Howe's Works, folio, Vol. I. p. 655. The splendid copy, whence this extract was taken, in Dr. Williams's Library, appears to have belonged to the Royal Family. It was possibly the property of the literary Queen of George II.

† See Cary's Memorial of the Civil War in England, Vol. II.

in Middlesex. The name of the Master, Mr. William Moses, has been already mentioned.

About fifteen years before these excellent men were appointed Fellows, the college had been largely benefited by the goodwill and generosity of Sir Robert Hitcham, a former alumnus of Pembroke Hall, and afterwards a serjeant-at-law and a Member of Parliament. He bequeathed to the Master and Fellows the castle, manor and advowson of Framlingham, in the county of Suffolk. The incumbent of Framlingham in 1650 was Richard Golty, who had held the living for twenty years. He had a conscience, and scrupled to take the Engagement. His ejection, which was the consequence, gave Pembroke Hall an early opportunity of employing its newly-acquired patronage. Henry Sampson received the rectory, the most valuable preferment in the gift of his college. The church at Framlingham, dedicated to St. Michael, is a very noble ecclesiastical edifice, having nave, chancel (nearly equalling the nave in length), side aisles, and a noble square tower nearly 100 feet high.

In Framlingham, Henry Sampson would find a fair field for the exercise of ministerial ability and zeal, and some scope for his literary and antiquarian tastes. As a preacher, he is said to have gained general acceptance, and the favourable verdict of his parishioners was confirmed by the judgment of the people of Coventry, who had occasionally the opportunity of hearing him in his father-in-law's church. He took much interest in the historical recollections which the town and its noble castle inspired. Of the latter he drew up a short account, which may be found in the later editions of Leland's Collectanea. This short antiquarian essay bears date 1663. He had previously, and while residing at Framlingham (1657), edited Thos. Parker's Latin treatise on "The Method of the Divine Grace in leading Sinful Man to Life, succinctly and completely explained in Seventy Propositions."

The author was the son of Robert Parker, a learned Nonconformist, compelled for safety to quit England for Holland. Thomas Parker was also an exile, but found a home in America, where with some religious friends from England he founded the town of Newbury, choosing that name because in Newbury, Berkshire, his ministry had been carried on.

The "Method of the Divine Grace" is in fact a manual of Calvinistic theology. It is well composed, has the merit, so rare in theological treatises, of brevity, and is free from that asperity which is the common fault of polemical writings.

Mr. Sampson not only carefully revised the text from MS. and printed copies of this work, but added a Preface, like the work itself, in Latin, which gives good evidence of the writer's elegant scholarship.

Dr. Grew speaks of the work as "a golden book with a golden

epistle prefixed." The epistle is not unworthy of this commendation. He describes Parker's book as a string of pearls. In history, he observes, abridgments are mere waste paper; but in polemical theology great books are great evils. Like mountains, the greater they are, their tops are the more barren. He gives his author this praise, that "he stole from no one and assailed no one." "The names of Arminius and Socinus are by him not mentioned; but he passes by nothing necessary to the subject or argument."

He alludes plaintively to his position at Framlingham, as one dwelling at the very extremity of England,—an exile from nearly every kind of pleasant literature. He doubtless felt, as hundreds have felt since, that the transition from the learned halls of an university and the society of the cultivated and wise to the dull quietude of a country parsonage and the talk of unlettered squires and their rude hinds, is to a scholar unspeakably distasteful.

There was in the county of Suffolk in those days more of Independency than of Presbyterianism. Henry Sampson had no presbytery near him to confer upon him such orders as it could give. He remained, therefore, to the last without ordination.

Presently the Restoration brings back to Framlingham Mr. Golty; and Henry Sampson's parochial functions are at an end. His non-ordination freed him from the anxiety experienced by those of his friends who had been solemnly ordained to the work of the ministry, and who felt what Oliver Heywood said—"Woe is mine, if I do not preach the gospel."

How long an interval he allowed to pass between his abandonment of the ministerial office and his preparation for another profession, we do not certainly know. Probably he saw the killing Act of Uniformity in operation before he abandoned the hope of fulfilling the object of his education.

We cannot doubt that Henry Sampson's Nonconformity was his own deliberate and unbiassed choice. His brother William, seven years younger than himself, also educated at Pembroke Hall (he graduated M.A. in 1660), continued in the Church of England to the close of his life, and obtained preferment in his native county, and also in the Cathedral of Lincoln. It not unfrequently happened that members of the same family ranged themselves with different ecclesiastical parties. Not seldom the sons of eminent Nonconformist fathers trod the beaten and more gainful path of Conformity. This was the case with the son of Henry Newcome, of Manchester.

When Henry Sampson saw that every door was shut by which he could with untarnished conscience re-enter the ministry, he chose the medical profession as the best alternative before him.

Mr. Howe, speaking of the clerical and medical professions, remarks that the step is easy from the one to the other; and,

glancing at his two friends Sampson and Grew, proceeds to remark: "There are some instances, and blessed be God, 'tis to be hoped there are others, which shew that *religio medici* is not always opprobrious or a note of ignominy and reproach, and that *a beloved physician* on the best account was not appropriate to the first age. That calling gives great opportunity to a man of a serious spirit of doing good to the soul, and I know it has been improved by some to discourse and pray with their dying patients; and when their art could not immortalize their bodies, they did all that in them lay for the saving of the immortal souls." Considerations of this nature led several of the ejected ministers to study and practise medicine. As instances, we may mention Dr. John Reynolds, ejected from Wolverhampton; Dr. Francis Cross and Dr. Ichabod Chauncy, both of whom practised at Bristol; Dr. Gilbert Rule, the ejected curate of Alnwick; Dr. Nathaniel Fairfax, ejected from Willisham, the son and brother of ejected clergymen; and Dr. Abraham Clifford, like Sampson, a Fellow of Pembroke Hall.

In order to prepare himself for the practice of medicine, he went abroad, visiting France, Italy and Holland. He stayed some time at Padua, but still longer at Leyden, which had already acquired a high reputation as a school of medicine,—a reputation subsequently increased by the lectures of Paul Herman and Alexander Pitcairn. The university of this city, with its noble library and splendid botanical gardens, was founded in the sixteenth century in commemoration of the fidelity of the citizens in enduring a siege of fearful severity made by the Spaniards. Here, a few years after Sampson's and Grew's time, Boerhave and our own countryman Richard Mead studied. But there were others besides medical students then sheltering at Leyden. One distinguished man was there, with whom Sampson had much intercourse,—Oliver St. John, who in Charles's and Cromwell's days had played a conspicuous part both as a constitutional lawyer and a politician, and had been rewarded by the Chief Justiceship of the Court of Common Pleas. Though clear in the matter of King Charles's trial and condemnation, he put no faith in Stuart promises of indemnity, and withdrew to Holland.

When Henry Sampson had obtained his physician's degree, he returned to England and established himself in London. Here he was admitted an Hon. Fellow of the College of Physicians, and sought, not without success, medical practice.

He took or gained an excellent position among the more learned members of his new profession. On this subject, better testimony cannot be desired than that of his half-brother, the learned Dr. Nehemiah Grew, who tells us that among the members of the College of Physicians he justly obtained the repute of being substantially learned in all points of his profession. He devoted considerable attention to morbid anatomy, and accumulated a

series of valuable cases in which he detailed observations made on post-mortem dissections. His practice became large and remunerative; but it is recorded to his honour by his friend and pastor, Mr. Howe, that he rejoiced in all opportunities of attending and relieving those who were unable to pay the customary fee, and that his attention was as great in such cases as in any others.

Dr. Henry Sampson did not, on his return to England, forget the Nonconformity which had necessitated his temporary exile and his change of profession. He joined one of the several Nonconformist societies which, spite of the Act against Conventicles and other persecuting laws, met about 1670, and probably earlier, in the very heart of the city. The pastor of the Presbyterian church which he joined about 1670 was Dr. Lazarus Seaman, ejected from All-Hallows, Bread Street, who had been one of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and succeeded Dr. John Cosin in the Mastership of Peterhouse College, Cambridge. He was assisted in his ministerial labours by Dr. Thomas Jacomb, ejected from St. Martin's, Ludgate, and was succeeded by the more celebrated Mr. John Howe.

In his elaborate "History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches," Mr. Walter Wilson fixes the locality of this society in Silver Street, in the Meeting-house Yard, and describes the place as "a small oblong building with three galleries, shut in from the street, concealed from observation, and admirably adapted to times of persecution. But from Thoresby's Correspondence, Vol. I. p. 182, it appears that the earlier place of meeting was Haberdashers' Hall, at the back of the present Post-office. It was occupied, subsequently to Lady-day, 1695, by another Dissenting congregation, of which Mr. Stretton, the ejected minister of Petworth, was the pastor. The strength of the Nonconformists lay in the trading community, and many of the halls of the city companies were used, before and after the Act of Toleration, as places of Nonconformist worship, a circumstance which, as has been well observed by the author of the "Religious Life in England," gave their peculiar architectural character to the early Nonconformist meeting-houses. The new chapel in Silver Street, described by Mr. Walter Wilson, was built for Mr. Howe, and after the persecution of Dissenters had ceased. Both places were among the most celebrated seats of Dissent in the metropolis. Titled ladies did not hesitate to frequent the humble conventicles in those retired city nooks. The Countess of Exeter was the unceasing friend and protector of the second pastor, and it was in her house in Little Britain that he died in 1687. Sir Thomas Abney, whose name is so closely connected with the history of English Nonconformity, was a member of the congregation. Others of the ejected clergy, besides Dr. Henry Sampson, worshiped there. But neither the character of the preachers nor the rank of some of the flock

had at one time sufficed to protect them from outrage. For two or three years, at the close of the reign of Charles II., Mr. Howe did not think it safe to venture unnecessarily into the streets, and his congregation was on one occasion disturbed when he was preaching by the officers employed to enforce the persecuting laws; many were seized and imprisoned or fined. One of the victims was Mr. Richard Dowley, who had been ejected from Elford, in Staffordshire.

Dr. Sampson married a lady of exemplary and religious character. Their happiness was, however, clouded by her long-continued illness. She died on Sunday, November 24, 1689, after eighteen years of suffering, borne with calm and gentle resignation. The bereaved husband suggested to his pastor the text for the funeral sermon, and never were words of scripture more felicitously adapted to the circumstances: Luke xiii. 16, "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?" A letter of Mr. Howe's relating to the publication of this sermon is fortunately preserved:

"*To my worthy friend, Dr. Henry Sampson.*

"Sir,—I have perused the papers which you sent me, and find, as far as I can recollect, they contain in them the substance of what was delivered, with no more mistakes than is usual in writing from the mouth of one who is not of the slowest of speakers. Some things beside, which the limits of the time allowed not to be spoken (having some short memorials of them before me), I have added, conceiving they might also contribute towards the good end you proposed to yourself in so earnestly desiring this publication, the assisting of their patience and their good and placid thoughts of God, who are exercised under long and languishing distempers. The observation which your profession has occasioned you to make in the case of many others, hath, I doubt not, let you see the need of somewhat to this purpose; otherwise the example you have had so long before your eyes of so calm and composed a temper in this excellent relation of yours, might have made you less apprehensive how great an addition a fretful, ungenial spirit is to the sin and the affliction of a sickly state. I am sensible your own affliction is great in the loss you now sustain; the relief will be great and suitable which the forethought of that state will afford where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. I am, Sir, in much sincerity and affection, yours to serve you in the work and labours of the gospel, "J. H."

The closing words of this letter, from one of the mildest and purest of the Christians of his age and class, were not mere complimentary expressions. Mr. Howe well knew, and has borne emphatic testimony to, Dr. Sampson's habitual religiousness of spirit.

"Nor," said he, "were the great advantages lost which he had gained for the instruction of a congregation (had the state of things and his judgment concurred thereto), for they eminently appeared to such as

had the privilege of living under his roof, and of partaking of the instructions which his great acquaintance with the holy Scriptures enabled him to give them from time to time; which, together with his daily fervent prayers and holy conversation, made his family as a well-ordered and watered garden compared with the howling wildernesses of too many others. But in all my conversation with him, nothing was more observable or more grateful to me than his pleasant and patient expectation of the blessed state which he now possesses. The mention whereof would make joy sparkle in his eye and clothe his countenance with cheerful looks, accompanied with such tokens of serenity and a composed temper of mind, as shewed and signified submission with an unreluctant willingness to wait for that time which the wisdom and goodness of God shall judge seasonable for his removal from a world which he loved not, nor yet could disaffect from any sense of its unkindness to him, but only of the prospect he had of a better."

To have enjoyed, as Dr. Sampson did (with some interruptions, however, during Mr. Howe's enforced absence abroad), for about a quarter of a century the public services and the private, confidential society of this wise, gentle and catholic-hearted Christian pastor, was of itself enough to reconcile Dr. Sampson to his own disappointment in respect to the ministry. During the latter years of their lives they were close neighbours, both living in Love Lane, Wood Street, Cheapside. There were many bonds to unite Howe and Sampson. Both had been ejected, both had lived in Holland, and received courtesies from distinguished scholars there. Mr. Howe's eldest son, George,* was a physician, who had also studied medicine in Holland, and afterwards practised in London.

Dr. Sampson delighted in the society of the ejected clergy, so many of whom found a haven in the evening of their stormy day in the hospitable houses of the wealthy citizens of London. He has recorded the names of not a few to whom he was accustomed to render the valuable aid of his professional knowledge. In the course of nine months (1695-6), he lost nine friends in the ministry, of whom eight had at one time or another been his patients. Sighing over their memory, he wrote, "Oh, how many of my acquaintance, friends and patients, go to heaven before me!"† What endless themes of interesting conversation these once persecuted men, now delightedly enjoying their religious liberty, would have one with another! The mere enumeration of their names is suggestive: *Mr. Mayo*, ejected from Kingston, the father of that Mr. Mayo who was the first preacher in the Gravel-Pit meeting-house, Hackney; *Edward Lawrence*,

* Dr. George Howe married into the Foley family of Whitley Court. We know from Richard Baxter's Life that in the early days of English Dissent, the Foleys and other distinguished families did not disdain to worship in conventicles.

† This incident and many others in this memoir are gathered from Thoresby's Extracts from Dr. Sampson's Day-books preserved in the Library of the British Museum, additional MSS., 4460, Plut.

ejected from Baschurch, in Shropshire, of whom it was said he had eleven strong reasons against Nonconformity, viz., his wife and ten children, but his faith in God outweighed all these reasons. Being asked how he would support them, he answered, "They must live upon that text in Matthew, *Take no thought for your life*," &c. He was the close friend of Philip Henry and Mr. Heath, the latter the friend and correspondent of Milton; *Mr. Francis Mence*, an Oxonian and a writer; *Mr. Baker*, to whom was attached the *soubriquet* of "Mother Church," an odd name for an ejected minister; *Mr. Thomas Miles*, ejected from St. Chad's, at Lichfield, the history of whose persecutions, adventures and escapes, if minutely written, would fill a volume; *Mr. John Chester*, an ejected clergyman of Leicestershire, one of those brave spirits who preached and saved souls through all the horrors of the plague in London; *Mr. William Rathband*, of Highgate, the son of an old Nonconformist minister in Lancashire; *Mr. Kentish*, ejected from Middleton, in Durham, whose sufferings in the cause of Nonconformity could not silence either himself or three sons whom he bred up to the ministry. These men, and such as these, and their families and friends, were the associates of Dr. Henry Sampson. He was accustomed to write down in his "Day-book" the little histories and anecdotes which fell from them in familiar talk. Invaluable would these be to the biographer of the ejected clergy, could they be found. A small portion of them has come down to us through the industry of a Leeds antiquary, a considerable sample of which we propose to give in another article.

Sampson, while true to his principles and proud of associating with the order of men for which his original destination and early habits fitted him, was a man of the world, had his share of humour, and found profit and pleasure in the society of intelligent men of all classes. Thus we find his Day-books contain gleanings of his talk with Sir Thomas Rokeby, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; Mr. Erskine, the Master of the Charterhouse; Lady Rokeby, Dr. Tennison, Lord Chief Justice St. John (his former companion at Leyden), Dr. Lightfoot, Serjeant Maynard, Jeremiah Whichcott; and with many physicians, such as Dr. Wilman, Dr. Hulse, Dr. Horseman (of Newark), Dr. Bates (of Canterbury), Dr. Walker, Dr. Howe, and his half-brother, Dr. Grew. In one passage of the Table-book, he mentions the name of a Mrs. Fryer, and adds, "with whom I table." Possibly he boarded at the house of this lady between the time of his first wife's death and his second marriage. His second wife bore the name of Anna, as his first did that of Elinor. One of them perhaps belonged to the respectable Nonconformist family of the Woolleys, connected with an ejected minister of that name, who lived at Hackney. Sampson speaks several times in his notes of his "brother Woolley."

A son, who died young, was the issue of the second marriage. Mrs. Sampson survived her husband.

His library is mentioned with respect by Mr. Howe, to whom some of its treasures seem to have been willed.

It is much to be regretted that, with the exception of the Preface to Parker and the short account of Framlingham Castle, Dr. Sampson committed nothing to the press. He had made large historical collections, and begun some biographical and historical works illustrative of the religious history of England; but nearly all of them are unhappily lost to the world. The best account of them is that given by Dr. Calamy in the Preface to his Abridgment of the Life of Baxter:

"It is well known to many that Dr. Henry Sampson, who at first designed for the ministry, and was afterwards an eminent physician for many years in this city, had taken a great deal of pains in collecting materials for a history of Nonconformity, and memoirs concerning the ancient and modern Nonconformists. Several of his papers having been kindly put into my hands, and of use to me in this work, especially in the second part; and among the rest having by me a plan of his design, I shall here communicate it to the world. It was to be entitled, *An Essay of the History of Puritanism and Nonconformity; declaring what the Men of those Characters have done and suffered since the Reformation of Religion in England.*

"It began with the Introduction or a Preface, shewing what were the things contended, and the points of difference as well in doctrine as discipline, government, liturgy, &c., wherein they desired reformation.

"The work was to be divided into 26 chapters, the first treating of the Reformers in the time of Henry VIII., and the last giving an account of those 2000 Nonconformists that were deprived and silenced after the restoration of King Charles II., exhibiting a list of their names, some short account of the actings, writings and sufferings of several of the most eminent amongst them, and the characters of such of them as Anthony Wood hath injuriously reflected on and falsely represented, modestly vindicated."

Of the nine concluding chapters of this work, extending from the meeting of the Assembly of Divines in 1643 to the persecution of Nonconformists in the latter years of Charles II., Dr. Calamy made large use. Dr. Calamy further remarks:

"Had this work been finished and appeared in the world, it might have been a means of convincing some, that Nonconformity hath all along had a closer connection with our civil and religious interest than they are willing to allow. And that the present Nonconformists (as much as they are inveighed against) act in the main upon the same principles with those who have been most eminent for serious religion ever since the Reformation. But he did not live to accomplish his design, and his papers have since been scattered."

Thoresby, who saw the papers when in the possession of Dr. Calamy (1709), speaks of them as incomplete, and reports that "the characters of the Assembly of Divines seemed the most

perfect." They were about the same time in the hands of Mr. Tong (the biographer of Matthew Henry), whose connection with Coventry would account for their being submitted to him.

There is abundant occasion for regretting the suppression and dispersion of historical collections and memoirs designed to do justice to the principles, characters and sufferings of the champions of Nonconformity and religious liberty. The labours in this department of Roger Morrice and Jeremiah White are, it is to be feared, hopelessly lost. Little encouragement has hitherto been given to those who have sought to elucidate this page of English ecclesiastical history. May we indulge the hope that in this matter the Nonconformists of England will begin from this Bi-centenary year to pursue a more just and generous course towards the advocates of their principles?

We must hasten to notice the closing years of Dr. Sampson's life.

We have some traces of him in the Diary and Correspondence of Thoresby, the Leeds antiquary. In 1695, the latter visited him, and commends "his courteous demeanour." In the same year, the Dr. describes himself in a letter as "good for little in summer, but for nothing in winter." Asthma was the ailment which added to the infirmities and pains of age.

The last time he was sufficiently well to join the public service at Silver Street, was marked by an affecting incident. Just before his beloved pastor entered on the communion service, he received this note:

"Sir,—It is my request to you that you will please to acquaint the congregation with the great sense I have of the mercy of God, that hath afforded me communion with them and their ministry for thirty years together.

"But now being by the providence of God deprived of my health in the city, I am to seek relief thereof in the country air, and shall thereby be in a great measure deprived of these blessings; yet I earnestly desire their prayers for me and my family, that in some sort of such intercourse our communion may continue, if not in body, yet in spirit.

"Your servant, Henry Sampson."

The pastor, himself broken in health and strength, would give utterance to the desired prayers with deep emotion, feeling that his own course, as well as that of the beloved physician, was nearly run.

Dr. Sampson, struggling with age and asthma, first sought relief in the quiet and purer air of a suburban village. Presently he had a strong craving for his native air, and resolved to pay a visit to his brother William, then rector of Claworth, a village in the county of Nottingham, and but a few miles distant from South Leverton.

The sequel is best told in the words of Mr. Howe:

"That journey brought him into the better, even the heavenly coun-

try, God so ordering it that near the place where he drew his first breath he should draw his last, and end a very holy, useful life not far from the very spot where he began to live. In reaching the seat of a reverend brother of his, near to that of his birth, he there found for a very few days a *temporal,* and there entered upon his eternal rest. So, falling a little short of the *patrias sedes,* the place that had been the dwelling-place of his earthly parents, by a joyful anticipation he sooner arrived at his Heavenly Father's house, and found his place amongst the many mansions and everlasting habitations where was to be his proper and perpetual home."

Dr. Henry Sampson died July 23, 1700, in the 72nd year of his age. His remains were interred in the south chancel of Claworth church. A long Latin epitaph was placed over his tomb by his widow, and was probably drawn up by his brother. It makes no mention of the Dr.'s Nonconformity. In little more than two years another grave was opened in the south chancel, and it received the body of the rector. We may indulge the thought that both are alike happy, where ecclesiastical oppression and Nonconformity are unknown. Perish the bigotry which would doubt of the welfare of either on the ground of faith or forms of worship! Of the integrity and piety of Henry Sampson who will doubt? Let us in the absence of knowledge hope that William was not less honest or less pious in his conformity, and that both have been welcomed as good and faithful servants of their common Lord!

Mr. Howe, when he heard of the death of his friend and hearer for twenty years, gratified his friendship and piety alike by preaching and publishing a noble sermon from Hebrews x. 34, "On the Expectation of Future Blessedness."

Dr. Sampson died a wealthy man, his fortune being estimated at £8000 or £9000; a proof that Nonconformist patients were not few in number or niggardly in their fees. Some of his brethren were scandalized that of this huge estate, as it seemed to those frugal and self-denying men, nothing was left "to pious and charitable uses."

Mr. Stretton, writing to Oliver Heywood, gave utterance to the feeling of disappointment; but attributed all to the influence of the wife, who, resolving to "be made a lady,"* forced the dying man before he left London "to make a new will." But this was possibly mere gossiping scandal; and the worthy Dr., shrewdly foreseeing the gross perversions which after times would witness of funds left for pious and charitable uses, might think it better to leave his money to those who, if they used it unwisely and selfishly, should not therein add to their responsibility the sin of unfaithfulness to a declared trust.

* If the second Mrs. Sampson did not fully share her husband's *Nonconformist* sympathies, we may comprehend the harshness of Mr. Stretton's remark, and also understand how it came to pass that Dr. Sampson's histories did not see the light of publicity.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. S. F. MACDONALD.

The obituary pages of this Magazine have recorded the death, at Rochdale, on Jan. 9, 1862, aged 39, of Simon Frederick Macdonald, minister of the Unitarian congregation assembling in Blackwater-Street chapel,—greatly esteemed by his own congregation, and by a wide circle of friends outside the Unitarian body. He was born in Aberdeen in 1822, of parents who, except a good example and a spotless name, had little else to bequeath to their children. His education he received partly at Aberdeen and partly at Bonn. In 1846, he married Miss Fannie Elizabeth Stallybrass, of London. He was minister successively, and with acceptance, at Dorchester, Shepton Mallet, Diss, Chester, and Rochdale. In 1849, he removed from Shepton to Diss, spending seven happy years of ministerial usefulness with a most kind and attached congregation, and leaving only because he desired a wider field of labour. For three years he was minister at Chester, and two years at Rochdale,—where he died full of hope, in the midst of his work, and when looking forward to still many years of useful activity.

The decease was sudden and unexpected; for just within one short week he had attended a congregational meeting at Todmorden, feeling only, as was supposed, the effects of a cold, which he did not allow to detain him from fulfilling a promise to his friends. Returning to Rochdale on Friday, Jan. 3, his indisposition rapidly assumed a serious form. The best medical advice and attendance were around him. Dr. Cox did all that skill and unremitting attentions could accomplish; but in spite of a vigorous constitution, the attachment of friends and kindred, and the imploring helplessness of a dependent family, inflammation of the lungs, and subsequently congestion of the brain, did their final work.

It is probable that he may have imposed too much labour upon himself, in what he conceived to be the conscientious discharge of his public and private duties. For he was no mere cumberer of the ground, doing listless hand-work where no heart is, but an earnest worker; and he went among the people exemplifying a practical Christianity in the sweetness of his temper and the unostentatious integrity of his life; endeavouring to spread truth and pure religion by week-day meeting, as well as by the more formal and studied services of the Sunday. In the sister congregation of Clover Street, he was almost as much at home, and perhaps as much valued, as in his own congregation; and he conciliated respect from men of other denominations by the urbanity of his manners, his fairness in dealing with opponents, and the quiet energy which he threw into his public proceedings. The numbers that lined the streets and crowded the chapel, on occasion of the funeral, testified to the estimation in which he was held. And

there are other and better evidences, that he did not labour altogether without result. His usual good health and vigour seemed to foreshow a long career of usefulness, and he was of those who would rather do too much than too little,—rather wear out than rust out. He has been removed at comparatively an early age, in the midst of useful labour, full of promise of far greater usefulness, and with intellectual and moral powers which were destined never to ripen under *our* earthly sky. Without setting up extravagant claims to intellectual superiority, and to an eminence which he never attained, he was unquestionably a man of varied accomplishment, cultivated literary taste, versatile powers, strong social and domestic attachments, unbounded good-nature, deep religious feeling, and high moral principle. A worker and also a thinker, he strove to do well whatever he undertook. Even his ordinary epistolary correspondence disclosed the man of taste and order, who could bear to do no sloven's work. Deeming the office and service of a Christian minister to be of highest honour,—invested with intrinsic sanctity,—he gloried in his work, and was willing to spend and be spent in it. Idolizing and idealizing his profession, he aimed to be a scientific theologian; and his sympathies were with the men of progress, both in our own body and in other denominations. He possessed in an eminent degree a catholicity of feeling, which prepared him to work with all good men and true of every name and sect, and of no sect, to make the world better. And this catholicity of spirit did not evaporate in indefinite vagueness, as if liberality consisted in having the mind swept and emptied of all strong convictions and sharply-defined beliefs. We have occasion to know that his own principles were never ambiguous, and never far to seek; though he was always prompt to give the right hand of fellowship to all earnest men of every creed. A native of Aberdeen, he had been brought up in the strictest tenets of Scottish Calvinism according to the Established Church; and his accession to the free and benevolent theology of Unitarianism, was not merely the result of a calm balancing of evidence, and a logical working out of his own emancipation from that most tremendous and well-linked system of theology which is laid down in the Westminster Confession; but it was the warmest dictate of heart and reason and ideality all conjoined; and with no hesitating acceptance he rose to the faith whose leading principle is God our Father. In common with so many others among us, he felt that the wants of our day demand a varied and growing culture on the part of the clergy, and he aimed to keep abreast with the spirit of the age, made incursions into many fields of literature and science, and strove after systematic self-culture as an indispensable instrument for effectively acting on others. History, poetry, politics, the physical sciences, but chiefly the moral sciences and the philosophy of religion, were his chosen studies; and he had made in

some of them no contemptible acquisitions. Having some poetic taste, he occasionally amused a leisure hour in translating from the German poets, or in attempts at original composition. But there was nothing into which he entered with so much relish, or continued with such unabated and growing delight, as the performance of his ministerial and religious duties. Adopting the practice recommended by Professor Ware, of America, and also by the Professors of Manchester College, London, he was in the habit of giving both written and unwritten services,—a practice which conduces to the lucid order and compression of the one method, with the freedom and animation of the other. Always ready to help and conduct week-day classes for mutual improvement, among the younger part of the congregation, he had also some ambition to be an occasional lecturer on literature, &c., as well as preacher; and in all discussions, public or private, his manner was bland, and his bearing uniformly courteous in expressing difference of opinion. A recent lecture and discussion in Rochdale with a lady of Secularist views, gave indication of the tone and temper in which he was prepared to meet such occasions. He had purposed, we believe, to embark somewhat largely into the inquiries and discussions connected with the religious views and alleged heresies of the working classes; and perhaps by the production of some work on the Philosophy of Religion directed to those deeper problems implicated with Christian theology, which lie beneath the surface of sectarian controversy, he hoped that he might be a humble co-operator with some of the more advanced thinkers of the day, in the effort to settle men's minds on the rock of true and everlasting religion, while so many are drifting away from the old moorings and seeking new havens of refuge.

Words could hardly tell how much he was prized and endeared to the family of which he was a member, as well as to those of his own household. A wife and seven children, the eldest under fourteen years of age, were left to lament his loss; but on Jan. 29, within three weeks of the father's death, the youngest nurseling was consigned to the same grave which contained the father's remains. Funeral services have been conducted at Rochdale and at Chester, by Revds. L. Taplin, of Todmorden, J. Wright, of Bury, J. K. Montgomery, of Chester, to deeply interested and sorrowing audiences, who grieved as for a departed friend and brother. And both the congregations of Rochdale and Chester have evinced their benevolent care for the surviving family, by a prompt and generous munificence; and many of the Unitarian body throughout the country have worthily responded. The hand of friendship and of kindred can scarcely hold an impartial pen while speaking of one so dearly beloved; the needful deductions will be made; but to those who knew him best, he seemed indeed to be one of the excellent of the earth, one of God's own

nobility, a true and worthy man struggling bravely to fight life's battle; and not soon will the void of the heart be filled to those to whom he was dear,—to some of us never. Peace be with his memory; it will be green in our souls after months and years have fled! A. M.

February 8.

UNITARIANISM IN TRANSYLVANIA.*

Our readers will need an interpretation of the title-page which we have placed at the foot of this page. It is, "Church Prayers and Sermons delivered on the occasion of the Meeting of the Synodical Consistory of the Transylvanian Unitarians at Torda, June 29 and 30, and July 1 and 2, 1861." The pamphlet has been transmitted to us by the newly-elected Transylvanian Bishop.

It is an interesting fact that this Unitarian volume is printed by the kind aid of the Roman Catholics, as the Unitarians have not at present the command of a press of their own. It will interest our readers to know how their brethren in Transylvania talk and write, and we therefore present them with specimens, kindly translated, at our suggestion, by the intelligent Transylvanian clergyman who is at present studying our language, institutions and theological literature, at Manchester New College, under the auspices of his own Consistory, aided by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

Our first extract is taken from the third part of the sermon, "The Kingdom of God," by Rev. Joseph Ferenz.

"My brethren! it is not either the multitude of nationalities, or the multitude of sects, which keeps far from us the kingdom of God, but that these are not all equally inspired by the spirit of the gospel, which teaches that they should be *every one members one of another* (Rom. xii. 5); that all of us have not the token of discipleship of Jesus, *having love one to another* (John xiii. 35); that there are many who put their religion on a basis of mere policy, who use it as a means of worldly advantage, and who make it an object of merchandize. They seek to manifest it in outward ordinances rather than in good works, in dogmatic forms rather than in piety, and so they *give that which is holy unto the dogs* (Matt. vii. 6). If, therefore, we desire to complete the glorious work of building up the kingdom of God, we must take care that we do not fall under this heavy accusation. We must shew that the truths of the gospel exercise a vital influence on our souls. As the love of man dwelt in the heart of its Founder, so must it in ours. We must shew that we not only know the moral teachings and laws of Jesus, but that we follow

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* Egyházi Imák és Beszédek. Elmondattak az erdélyi Unitáriusoknak 1861-ik évi junius 29-töl julius 2-káig bezárólag Tordán tartott. Zsinati Föegyháztanácsa Alkalmával. 8vo. Pp. 74.

them also, *and herein do we exercise ourselves to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and men* (Acts xxiv. 16); we must shew that our thoughts, sentiments and works are in agreement with the precepts of our religion, that we love God with all our heart and with all our strength, that we love our neighbours as ourselves without any distinction, and that *whatsoever we would that men should do to us, so even should we do to them* (Matt. vii. 12).

We must take a passage from the speech with which Rev. Móses Székely opened the Synod.

"Let some even at this day, who do not know the principles of our faith, or who wish to misinterpret and denounce them, call us Christ-denyers, because we Unitarian Christians do not acknowledge Jesus Christ to be co-equal with the Father and a second person in the Godhead. We believe and confess him to be a Mediator between God and men, as we are taught in the Scriptures. We do not make any account of such men at all, because, according to sober philosophy or the religion of the mind, that church alone dedicated to his Father can stand on a secure foundation and unshaken, which has this seal or motto: *The Lord knows who are his own;* or, *As the Searcher of hearts and reins, He alone knows who honour him in spirit and in truth.*"

We proceed with a passage from the first part of a sermon, "The Necessity of the Progressive Element in Religion," by Rev. Lewis Nagy.

"There are clear proofs that the human soul is called to make continual efforts to attain perfection. The want of knowledge in men is not a hindrance in the way of this perfection. The naturalist studies the phenomena and products of the earth to make himself acquainted with those truths and principles which are latent in the elements. With what admiration does the astronomer investigate the heavenly bodies! Neither the Inquisition, nor the wrath or punishment of any other power, can make Galileo and Copernicus stop in their study of heaven and earth. I ask you, the members of this Synodical Assembly, is it right for us not to feel the need and desire of a purer knowledge of the Lord of nature and the God of heaven and earth? Is it right that God's holy laws pertaining to the freedom of the soul shall remain obscured by ignorance, trammelled by fetters of selfishness and prejudice, of blindness and superstition? It is, indeed, not right, for it is in opposition to the nature of the soul, which is called to continual efforts after perfection. . . . . Shall we not seek more abundantly for truth in the knowledge pertaining to religion? Must we stop at the point which Luther, Calvin or Socinus reached? I know the objection of those who say that pure science has its origin in men, and that, as such, it is imperfect and needs to be developed and modified; but that Christian theology has its origin from God, that God himself revealed it through His chosen, who wrote infallibly, that in this progress is impossible, that these are the limits of our faith. I also believe, my brethren, in those eternal truths which are not contradicted but affirmed by that first and continual revelation in nature, which do not contradict the nobler feelings and thoughts of my heart and mind, but yet make them nobler and more lofty. But I rather believe in truth

itself, which is engrafted into visible nature, into the living heart, than in the imperfect expression of truth. I would also make a distinction between essence and form in the science of religion. God is the essence of religion; biblical representations, descriptions, different dogmas, historical views and interpretations, are its form. Science affirms this essence, and seeks to make perfect the form also. And, my brethren, I have no desire to weaken, by any means, the authority of the sacred writers and the holy memory of reformers. They were men who rose above the multitude, of pure character, and they deserve our gratitude. They have recorded what they saw, they depict the impressions made upon them, they describe the period in which they lived, and represent what they believed. But that period differed from ours: the difference does not weaken their statements, only we must take them at their true value. Viewing from the present stand-point of science, they erred, and might err here and there in their descriptions; for perfect truth is only with God: however, they were not liars, because they were convinced of the truth they had written. Now if we, from the present view of human perfection, when we can see the truth in clearer light, accept for truths even those words in which they have erred, the fault rests not with them, but us. They delivered their experiences, convictions and belief to the age that succeeded them, and by this they did good service to humanity. If we hand over also the result of our learning, our conviction, we are only promoting the work of God in the education of the human race.

"Indeed, members of the Synodical Assembly, I dare to say, that if Jesus himself or the Apostle Paul were to appear amongst us, they would even at this time carry on to perfection the science pertaining to religion. For neither of them asked their followers to come to a dead stop, to content themselves with unconditional literal belief in the outer form of his teaching. On the contrary, Jesus himself in many places subjoins illustrations to the Old Testament and to his teachings; he says, *Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Does this saying suppose a stop to progress? Does it not rather indicate perpetual advancement? The Apostle Paul says to the Corinthians, *Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* And this renewal is in the continual perfecting of the human soul.

"I have heard an opinion expressed that Unitarianism is the religion of the future. I confess I rejoice in thinking it is so. It is because Unitarians inherited a free spirit from the founders of their faith, that they do not fear giving light to others. Hence it is our English brethren take the pains they do in diffusing their faith both among Christians and Heathens. That the kingdom of God may come, we must do all we can to make advances in the science pertaining to religion."

We next give a passage from the speech delivered at the ordination of five young ministers, by the Right Reverend John Kriza, the newly-elected Bishop.

"Very honourable Synodical Assembly, dear brethren! it seems to me as if the present days were like those holy days of the effusion of the holy spirit, like that first pentecost at Jerusalem, when, as it is written, *suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting,—and there appeared unto them*

cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of the disciples. And they were all filled with the holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the holy spirit gave them utterance. And what influence should this memorable place, the heart of this city so honourably distinguished in our ecclesiastical history (because glorified by the spirit of freedom), have upon us, and induce us to speak with other tongues than those of our every-day life, and to dwell on the marvellous facts connected with this pentecost of our ecclesiastical life! As in the olden times the son of Israel remembered the words of the law on the pentecost inscribed on stone by Moses, his national creator, on Mount Sinai, so we at the present occasion of our great ecclesiastical assembly cannot help remembering the glorious law* of religious liberty brought forth in this town, in consequence of which our religion and community took deep root in this country, and as the youngest child of the century of the Reformation went forth to its glorious work. I feel myself here at this moment as if the great Reformers of our religion were waving around me, whispering approving words into my soul with their spiritual lips, rejoicing that the brave spirit of free inquiry and proving all things has not deserted their successors; I think I hear the proposition of our first immortal Bishop, Francis David, about the 'communis prophetia,'† and the earnest discussions that ensued respecting articles of faith, ecclesiastical discipline and other matters; I feel as if I were looking on the troop of inspired and earnest-minded young men called out for church examination and for consecration to ministerial office, whose hearts glow with the holy fire of Christian zeal, and are prepared to go forth to many St. Peters from this town to preach everywhere the glorious doctrine of the Unity of God, the sublime conceptions respecting the person and works of the Mediator, to preach the holy precepts of strict morality, a worship free from ceremonies, and seconding their teachings by their examples, so as to raise the people to a higher degree of moral perfection. Yes, the Ecclesia of this city—according to the expression of one of our eminent theologians—has been the great heart-chamber of our ecclesiastical life since the origin of our faith; and I cannot wonder that when we, descendants of zealous brethren of old, though decreased in number yet not crushed in strength of soul, assembling on this memorable spot, feel our hearts beat with a quicker pulse,—I cannot wonder that our sentiments and opinions manifest themselves with a great freedom and power, so that, as it is written of that first pentecost, *they were all amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?*"

After this eloquent exordium, the worthy Bishop proceeds to dwell, as became the occasion and his own distinguished position, on the duties that befitted the minister of Christ's holy gospel, taking as his text the words, "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, making full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. iv. 5).

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* Unitarianism was acknowledged by the Diet held at Torda in 1568, under the reign of John Sigismund II.

† The "communis prophetia" was an act passed by the Diet held at Torda in 1578, by virtue of which everybody obtained full freedom to discuss, without any danger, those articles of faith which had not been settled by the Diet.

JUSTICE TO PRIESTLEY.

Sir,

Had you not very properly interdicted the discussion of merely metaphysical topics in your Magazine I should have felt no disposition to argue the points raised by Mr. Read in your last number, as they are either beside the mark or were long ago sufficiently settled, and as I did not write to you with any desire to commence a controversy. What I wish is "justice," alike to Priestley and myself; a justice which should consist in serious and impartial examination of our respective writings, instead of ignoring the one and condemning the other, in the self-same style that Unitarianism is treated by those Trinitarians who denounce without inquiring, and who approach everything heterodox with simple assertions of what orthodoxy has concluded to be true, thus saving themselves the trouble of understanding what they are determined not to believe. My letter amounted to this:—Priestley, who in everything saw beyond his compeers, enunciated a doctrine of the nature of man as body and soul one homogeneous substance (or subsistence), which at the time excited much attention, but which has been since quietly buried by his warmest admirers, even by those who hailed with so much satisfaction the decision that he should "have a statue." From his time the proofs have been daily growing that he was as right in his theory of man's simple unity as in his scientific discoveries, physiology in particular having established facts which he would have hailed with unqualified delight, seeing in them the strongest confirmation of his opinions. And yet his doctrine is never so much as hinted at: a physiologist of pre-eminence has himself told me he never read Priestley's book; and less distinguished writers of his class, while noticing phenomena which, if induction from facts can prove anything, must prove the correctness of Priestley's grand principle, grow alarmed at the necessary consequences of their own statements, and deprecate their readers' idea that they are becoming materialistic! At length a continental Professor of note puts forth an essay, intended to be *against* Materialism, in which he tells us that the very doctrine of a duality in man which Priestley set himself to controvert, is "demonstrated" to be false by no less a philosopher than Kant, and denied by "the best psychologians of the day," whom he proceeds to name. And this same worthy Professor seems not to know that the dualism which he disallows, and which he admits to have provoked all the gross conceptions on the contrary side that are so injurious to man's moral nature, is exactly what an English philosopher disallowed nearly a hundred years ago, and wrote his "Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit" to disprove. I ask, Sir, if all this is "justice to Priestley"? Or is it justice to truth, in men of the first mark for philosophical research and scientific attainments, to say, as one of such does in a letter now before me, "I doubt whether there is much difference between us in regard to the general nature of mental operations," and go on to shew by their writings that the difference is indeed almost infinitesimal, without at once frankly confessing that their doctrine of the mental functions amounts to neither more nor less than what is popularly understood by Materialism? The truth is that the mere word "Materialism" is a bugbear which neither the philosopher nor theologian of these times appears to have the courage to

face. I question not that many learned and conscientious men have honestly convinced themselves that the human being *is* a duality, and not a unity; and if they have fully and impartially considered the arguments on both sides, I should be the last to judge them for the conclusion they have arrived at. But I have as yet met with no condemners of my views who have fulfilled these conditions, or whom I might not properly address in the wise man's words, "Blame not before thou hast examined the truth: understand first, and then rebuke."

THOMAS CROMWELL.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

The Dutch at Home: Essays from the "Revue des Deux Mondes." By Alphonse Esquiros. Translated and edited by Lascelles Wraxall. 2 vols. London—Chapman and Hall. 1861.

THE series of essays on Holland now collected and translated attracted considerable and well-deserved attention on their first appearance in the periodical which was then the organ of the freest and most thoughtful minds in France. The author, a political exile, after three years of ennui in Belgium, following the advice of an English friend, betook himself to Holland, and in that quaint land of canals and fogs, and in the character of its industrious and worthy citizens, who in speech, figure, pleasures, religion, present so singular a contrast to the countrymen of Alphonse Esquiros, found most attractive subjects for his eye and pen.

The spirit in which he entered upon and followed up his task was the right one, both for securing his own and his readers' enjoyment. Disdaining to approach it in the spirit of a caricaturist, from conscientious scruples against ridiculing what is good, he entered frankly and seriously into the spirit of the civilization of the Netherlands. That spirit he found to be "serious, positive, simple and minute." He speaks of the mental pleasure to be found in identifying oneself with the life of another nation. He has, we think, in these admirable volumes illustrated the still higher *moral* pleasure of that process. As an exile, denied his rights as a citizen at home, he naturally looked with admiring eyes on the free institutions of Holland and the intense love of liberty which pervades its people.

"Their history is glorious, for they conquered at an early hour liberty, and have known how to defend it; and their present condition, though obscure, is worthy of envy; for with the slight resources of a country which they have constantly been compelled to draw from the deluge, they have forced nature to open her reluctant hand, and have learned to be rich by contenting themselves with little."

In the same spirit he describes Holland as

"— a society offering unique and enduring features, which after creating its territory, its navy, its laws, its representative government, its powerful municipal institutions, and its family life, retains an energetic resolution of living at home, without fearing or disquieting others."

These essays offer a chapter to almost every taste. It is not our

purpose to dwell long on them, or to attempt an analysis or even a slight description of the account of the physical features of the country, or the ingenious hydraulic apparatus by which its inhabitants turn their natural enemy, water, into their trusty servant. Nor shall we be tempted by the picturesque descriptions of M. Esquiros to linger on the canals, or to master the mysteries of Dutch trading, or to behold its fisheries either at home or abroad. Our chief object in naming the "Dutch at Home" is to survey, by the aid of this accomplished Frenchman, the peculiarities of the people in respect to education, morals and religion.

In our own country, before the great battle of religious liberty was fought and won, Holland was perpetually reproached, alike by dull divines and sparkling wits, as the country most tainted with an infinitude of heresies, and all its evil characteristics were supposed to be concentrated in Amsterdam, that "synagogue of sects."

In a rare folio poetical tract of the seventeenth century, entitled "The Character of Holland," we find utterance of the wonder of the poet at the miscellaneous character of the religion of the country:

> "Sure when Religion did itself embark,
> And from the East would westward steer its ark,
> It struck; and splitting on this unknown ground,
> Each one thence pillaged the first piece he found:
> Hence Amsterdam Turk, Christian, Pagan, Jew,
> Staple of sects and mint of schism grew;
> That bank of conscience, where not one so strange
> Opinion, but finds credit and exchange.
> In vain for Catholics ourselves we bear,
> The Universal Church is only there."

When licensers and other agents of intellectual oppression had put fetters on the press of England, our best books (including at one period the Bible itself) were generally printed in Holland. The first folio collection of the prose works of Milton bears the imprint of "Amsterdam." Many of the books of the early English Unitarians issued from the free press of Holland. Thus does our author speak of this characteristic of Holland:

"Holland, almost entirely surrounded by water, isolated from Europe by her language, and nearly forgotten in a corner of the continent, was to some extent predestined by nature as a place of asylum for all the victims of religious and political persecution. In this country, whose existence was incessantly menaced, a toleration based on gentleness of manners, the need of mutual assistance, and the fear of a common danger, was developed. Holland, amidst the deluge of blood which covered the world towards the close of the 16th century, was the ark of salvation. There all those whom the mother country had rejected found once more temples, a home and certain civil rights. The philosopher must revere this land, which has received the footsteps of all free thinkers; where Bayle the sceptic could live in peace, and Spinoza himself was not burnt. Respect for all strong and honourable convictions, and for all unmerited misfortunes, was allied in the Netherlands to a natural feeling of benevolence. The Protestants of Belgium and France, driven away by the hangman of Philip II., by the massacres of St. Bartholomew, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, found in Holland a Church, whose language, organization and religious edifices still exist in the Walloon Church. Most of the strangers waited for the rigour of the persecution to be relaxed, and entered Holland as a haven; but they remained there. Last of all came the Jews."

When our author speaks of the strangers who resorted to Holland in the first instance as a temporary haven, and says they generally stay after the storm of persecution has ceased, he should perhaps except our countrymen. Kindly as the Pilgrim Fathers were treated at Leyden and elsewhere in Holland, they did not take root, but shipped themselves for the then savage shores and frightful climate (in the winter at least) of the New World. The Marian exiles and the political refugees under the Stuart dynasty, who found an asylum in Holland during their time of trouble at home, all returned to England as soon as the occasion for alarm had passed. John Bull is an awkward linguist, and would rather be where he can speak and hear his mother tongue, though spoken with the worst accent and tone, than listen to the purest French or the sweetest Italian. But our author continues:

"There is a justice inherent in human things and actions. He who, according to the language of the gospel, has rewards for every act of charity, even for the glass of cold water given to a poor man, would not allow this religious toleration to pass without results for Holland. England owes her industrial prosperity to the strangers who flocked to her shores through the wars of the Reformation; and the Netherlands owe, partly at any rate, the splendour of their commerce to the Portuguese Jews. The banner of religious liberty attracted thither all those whom the old Catholic world would no longer have, and this has proved a source of intellectual and moral development for Holland. In the scale of physical life animals rise by the addition of new organs; in the same way, in the scale of social progress, the constitution of races is elevated by becoming complicated. Each of the adjoining groups brings, as it were, a new member to civilization. In Holland the accession of foreign elements was therefore a piece of good fortune for the country; liberty was fecundated by its own strength and by the auxiliary forces it assimilated. It is from the amalgamation of special faculties with the different gifts derived from strangers, that the greatness of Holland emerged in the 17th century.

"This religious liberty has remained one of the characteristic features of the Netherlands. Here Protestantism, though dominant, abstains from any external manifestation of worship; the streets are to a certain extent atheistical. Still it must not be concluded from this that there is no faith; on the contrary, Holland is one of the most religious countries on earth, but religion is there an affair between God and man. Regarding the size of the country, no other has so many sects as the Netherlands; but at the same time the religious communities nowhere live on a better understanding. They have taken seriously St. Paul's expression, *oportet hereses esse*—it is necessary that there should be dissenters. The Catholics, for a long time regarded as overthrown, at the present day enjoy all civil rights in Holland. Still no mistake must be made: under this toleration the national sentiment remains Protestant. Holland loves the religious Reformation as mothers love the child they have engendered in suffering."—I. 95—98.

Not unwisely has M. Esquiros devoted much attention to Dutch sailors and fishermen. They exhibit the essential features of the Dutch character. His picture of the hardy fishermen of Scheveningen is admirable. We can only extract a single passage.

"Strangers to social conventialisms, they will be neither regulated nor protected; and this feeling of independence is visible on their faces. The sailors and fishermen are distinguished from other men by the way in which they carry their heads erect in walking. It was for them, we might say, that the Ovidean line was written: *Os homini sublime dedit.* This love of liberty extends even to their religious belief. The fishermen of the coast, as we have

seen, are nearly all Reformers; they only recognize two books as having a right to speak to them of duty, the Bible and the Sea. It seems as if ocean exerts a moral and sanctifying influence over them, for intoxication is rare among the fishermen of Scheveningen, and those even who drink gin to excess on land, abstain from all intemperance when aboard. When at sea oaths are unknown, for maritime life exalts in these simple and ignorant men the religious feeling. When a fly-boat sets out, each fisherman generally takes his Bible with him; no meal is eaten without prayer, and it also ends with returning thanks. On Sunday, if the men are at sea, they abstain from fishing; if ashore, psalms may be heard from their little houses at an early hour."—I. 238, 239.

M. Alphonse Esquiros digresses widely, going from Holland to all places in Europe and America on which the Hebrew race have put their mark, in his disquisitions on the Jews. But his observations are so full of well-conveyed information, and are couched in a spirit so mild and genial, that we make no complaint. We cannot forbear giving more than one extract on this subject from the second volume.

"The Jews who stand aloof from this Pharisaic and Talmudist direction, draw singularly close to Christianity. They do not actually form a party; they are merely distinguished from the other Israelites by a more philosophical tendency and a wider interpretation of the Scriptures. The majority of them regard the spread of the gospel as a great Providential fact; they listen, as to an echo of their past and a foreboding of their future, to those national hymns which the different Christian Churches have borrowed from them; and they rejoice at an event which must pave the way throughout the world for the reign of their Messiah—the unity of the human race. On what motives, however, do they base their objections to join the Christian religion? They say that the Christ announced by the Scriptures must be a man, and not a God, or member of the Trinity; the promises made by the prophets from the beginning of the world, and which must be realized in the advent of the Messiah, are not all accomplished yet, because the human race has not vitally changed, because enmities and inequalities among men are not yet extinct, and because the universal peace has not yet set in."—II. 187, 188.

"The gratitude of the Jews to Protestant nations which sheltered them at a period when they were proscribed and wandering over the whole earth, has something touching and profound about it. The good understanding is not based solely on a service rendered, but on a conformity of religious belief and a common notion of duty. Israel is pleased to recognize in reformed Christianity its own doctrines as to the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, the inspired nature of the Scriptures, and the practice of domestic virtues. Both creeds proscribe graven images, and nothing so much resembles a Protestant temple as a synagogue. The Jews appeal to the authority of Christ as confirming the bond that unites them to the Anglican Church; for the gospel says salvation comes of the Jews. The three great creeds that cover the world with their influence, Catholicism, Protestantism and Mohammedanism, issued from Judaism as a common origin. A river must not deny its source, or a tree despise its roots."—II. 212, 213.

Not the least remarkable portion of the second volume is that in which M. Esquiros describes the several Dutch Universities. His is no mere surface view; and whether at Leyden, the seat of orthodoxy, or at Groningen, where a rational but so-deemed heretical theology is in the ascendant, his descriptions are equally instructive and striking.

After a powerful description of the siege of Leyden, the gallant resistance of the inhabitants to the Spaniards, and to still more terrible foes, famine and pestilence, and the relief of the apparently doomed city by the cutting of the dykes and the operation of a storm, which blew

the waves of the sea over the submerged land, and drowned the besiegers or drove them away in terror, M. Esquiros thus proceeds:

"The Prince of Orange had been prevented by illness from proceeding in person to Leyden. He was at Delft and had hardly recovered, and was at church when the happy news of the siege being raised was brought to him. He handed the despatch to the preacher, who read it aloud, and all burst into tears and thanksgivings. Although the plague still carried off its victims in the unhappy city of Leyden, William the Silent did not hesitate about proceeding thither. Surrounded by the inhabitants, who forgot their misfortunes on seeing in this man the living rampart of re-conquered liberty, he asked them which they preferred, an exemption from certain taxes or the foundation of a Protestant University. The citizens of Leyden did not hesitate on *(in)* their choice; the general cry was, 'A University.'"

A people like these patriotic citizens of Leyden deserved their freedom. But we must hasten to profit by M. Esquiros' description of the less orthodox institution at Groningen, where the liberal and progressive party are strongly entrenched. Our author writes as a Catholic, but he is evidently one of the more tolerant and philosophical of that Church.

"Messrs. De Groot, Pareau and Muurling, men well versed in the history of Christianity, share among them the different branches of instruction. Their ideas are not very clear, or at least very precisely defined in their works. . . . . The Groningen theologians defend themselves against the charge of undermining the edifice of the Reformation, but they pronounce themselves against synodal Protestantism. Their starting-point is the formal negation of all human authority in religious matters. They certainly accept the Synod of Dort as an historical fact; but it could not, according to them, in any way pledge the faith of future generations. The Groningen theologians accuse their opponents, who stand up for an official church and religious tradition, of desiring Papistry less the Pope; while themselves no more recognize a flesh and blood Pope than they do a paper Pope. Going back to the origin of the religious Reformation, they declare themselves for the doctrine of private judgment. The source of all light they find in reading the gospel interpreted in thorough good faith, but at the same time with all the independence of individual reason. Revelation, according to them, is only the education of the human race in Christ, and it is a fact that is still continuing. The epoch of the Reformation was one of the glorious phases of this historic initiation; but what the Reformers began must be carried on. The Groningen school itself gives an example of this incessant revision of the Christian dogma, by rejecting the mystery of the Trinity, no trace of which they say is be found in the Holy Scriptures; by denying predestination, that fundamental idea of Calvin, which supposes a cruel God, who enchains the human liberty; and by even setting aside the mystery of the Redemption, at least in the way of ordinary theology, which they call *the theology of blood*, comprehends it. In order to give this bold doctrine a local colouring, the Groningen theologians have exhumed from the archives of the Reformation a certain Wesselus Gransfortius, whose opinions agree with their own . . . . . The voice of this philosophical or heterodox school finds echoes in the pulpits of the Protestant National Church. The influence is not based on the lower classes, among whom, on the contrary, the narrow, but firm and precise, formulas of orthodoxy count numerous adherents; the moral strength of this doctrine of liberty is derived from the middle classes. Young and ardent preachers agitate throughout the Netherlands the flag of the new Protestantism, which they assert to be in conformity with the national history of religious ideas. To hear them, it is not they who are turning from the right path, but it was the Synod of Dort that departed from the spirit of the Reformation. Science has at any rate progressed since that assembly, celebrated in the annals of Europe, and society must move on with science. At the head of

the movement are Mr. Meyboom, pastor at Amsterdam, and Mr. Zaalberg, pastor at the Hague. Their election met with a lively resistance on the part of the consistory of both cities, but they were eventually appointed. On the day of their installation, both delivered at the same hour and on the same text, a sermon beginning with the words, 'We come to announce to you Christ, and nothing but Christ.' The two brothers in arms had evidently come to an understanding, and they continue marching nearly in the road. Some time ago, the King of Holland happened to be in Amsterdam on Sunday when it was Mr. Meyboom's turn to preach. The King hesitated about going to church, and thus encouraging to a certain extent by his presence heterodox teaching; but he speedily decided in the affirmative. This homage, rendered less to the doubtful doctrines of the preacher than to religious tolerance and the sovereignty of the opinion that had summoned Mr. Meyboom to the Evangelical pulpit, was regarded in Holland as an act of some gravity. The old National Church was crumbling away with its fundamental dogmas before the principle of election, and the respect that the chief of the state himself had testified to the liberty of belief. The Word and the Conscience, twin immortal sisters, thus emerged victorious from the contest, although it is true that they had been subjected to the sanction of their age. . . . . .

"There is a grave and delicate point on which the orthodox try to close with their opponents—the divinity of Christ . . . . . Christ is to them (the heterodox party) the most perfect type of humanity, the envoy of the Most High, the image of God; but is he God in person? . . . . . Some of them believe in the Divinity, but not in the Deity, of the Son of the Virgin. . . . . They evince a pride in evangelical morality, they testify an historic respect for some men of the Reformation, but between their ideas and those of Calvin, for instance, there is the distance of several centuries."—II. 127—132.

We have been tempted to make large extracts from these very interesting volumes, and have little space left for further remark. But we must say a word or two respecting their learned and liberal countryman, whom these able professors hold up as their forerunner in speculative freedom and theological reform. John Wesselus, according to the best account of him on which we can at once put our hands (the Abbé Ladvocat's Historical and Biographical Dictionary), was born about 1419 at Groningen. He attained during his life such celebrity as to be called by some "The Light of the World;" while others, in consequence of his want of reverent loyalty towards Aristotle, styled him "The Master of Contradiction." Having accompanied the General of the Friar Minorites to the Council of Basil, the latter, after his elevation to the Papal Chair with the title of Sixtus IV., holding him in the highest esteem, offered him any ecclesiastical promotion in his gift. Wesselus astonished the Pope by asking for a copy of the Bible in the two original tongues. The Pope remonstrated, and asked him why he did not ask for a mitre. The reformer replied, Because he did not want it. Taking with him the precious volumes, received in reply to his request, from the Vatican Library, he returned to his native country and died at Groningen, Oct. 4, 1489. Some of his MSS. were after his death burnt, but others were collected and printed, 1617, in quarto, at Marpurg. His countrymen regard him, with good reason, as one of the Reformers before the Reformation, — the forerunner of Luther. There was published at Amsterdam, in 1840, a treatise concerning his principles and virtues, which the writer declared to be even at this day deserving of approbation and imitation. Should any of our readers have access to this essay, they would greatly oblige us by transmitting some account of it for insertion in our pages.

Dedication Service at the Church of the Messiah, Broad Street, Birmingham, on New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1, 1862. 8vo. Pp. 28. London—Whitfield.

The publication of this interesting service is in compliance with the request of many friends who had the privilege of joining in the opening service of the Church of the Messiah. Mr. Madge's sermon is entitled to take its place with the best of those he has committed to the press. It will be scarcely correct to say that this discourse will make the same impression on those who read it, that it made on those who heard it in the varied and animated (but always melodious) tones of the preacher, with the accompaniment of his simple dignity of manner. But the solid thoughts that strew every page, expressed in a beautifully lucid style, not deficient in those ornaments which are consistent with a pure taste, will make this sermon instructive and pleasing to every intelligent and cultivated reader. The subject was happily chosen—*The Immutable Nature of Christian Truth.* The occasion—the removal of one of our most important congregations to a new house of prayer, and the day—the first of another of the greater revolutions of our globe, suggest the thought of what is transient and changeable. It was well to remind those assembled that all is not transient or given to change,—that God's revealed truth is eternal and immutable. It also well became Mr. Madge, occupying his vantage-ground of talent, age and position, to separate the faith of Unitarian Christians from the vague declarations of those who, in illustrating the progressive character of religion, sometimes appear to forget that, however men may change and human institutions disappear, the gospel of Jesus Christ is *the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.*

We shall, we believe, more profitably use the space we have in offering one or two extracts, than in attempting an analysis of the whole sermon.

After alluding to the proof which the condition of the heathen world afforded of the necessity of some authoritative declaration of religious truth, "published by a messenger with credentials to attest his authority," the preacher proceeds to characterize Lord Herbert's attempt to construct a religion of Nature.

"Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, one of the earliest and most respectable of the English Deists, lays down five principles which, he says, God has inscribed upon the minds of all men, and which render all revelation unnecessary. They are these:—1st, that there is only one supreme God; 2nd, that he is chiefly to be worshipped; 3rd, that piety and virtue are the principal part of his worship; 4th, that we must repent of our sins, and if we do so, God will pardon them; and 5th, that there are rewards for good men and punishments for bad men in a future state. Lord Herbert, if he had never heard of Christianity, if his thoughts had not been early imbued with Christian principles, would not have been able to write thus. He bathed his mind in this great fountain of light and knowledge, and these very words of his bear witness to the efficacy of its power. It is easy for us to imagine that reason might have done as well without Christianity as with it, but where is the proof of this? Where the probability? All experience is against it, decidedly and unequivocally. Where is the nation, unvisited by the light of revelation, that ever worshipped one only God? Or, where did the worship of uninstructed man consist chiefly of acts of piety and virtue? In what heathen land was repentance of sin ever made the means of averting the divine displeasure? It is

notorious that the very publication of such a doctrine on the part of the first Christians, at first subjected them to ridicule and reproach. Yes, it was by the gospel alone that the bonds of idolatry were broken. It is by the gospel alone that the standard of a pure morality has been set up among men. It is by the gospel alone that earth and heaven, time and eternity, have been shewn to be connected together as seed-time and harvest, as the river and the ocean into which it flows. Should the period ever arrive when man shall look upon himself as all sufficient for himself, when he may trust to his own intuitions as all that he needs for a light to his feet and a lamp to his path, when reason may dispense with faith and nature with hope, the value of the gospel may be disregarded, and its guidance and aid rejected; till then it will continue to engage the minds and interest the hearts of all who are conscious of ignorance which seeks to be removed, and of wishes and wants which need to be satisfied."—Pp. 14, 15.

In the unmistakably plain and equally reasonable words that follow, did the preacher put himself in opposition to those who would regard the gospel as one of many institutions, useful for its day, but designed to pass away and be succeeded by something better:

"It is, as it appears to me, a great mistake to suppose that on the subject of religion we should be like those who are ever seeking but never coming to a knowledge of the truth. The mind is weary of being tossed to and fro upon the sea of conjecture. It demands something that is stable and sure; something upon which faith can rest; something around which the affections can gather, to which the soul can cleave, and from which it may derive the support and the comfort of which it stands in need. This, however, is not the lesson which is taught in some modern schools of theology. According to them it would seem as if we were never to rest in any conclusion; as if no religious doctrine, however clearly it may present itself to our minds, should ever be held by us as what is unchangeably good and true. Now this, I conceive, arises from a mistaken view of the nature and character of religion itself; from confounding, in fact, the two distinct provinces of philosophy and religion. In philosophy, or I should rather say, in human science, we look for change; we look for new discoveries. The invention of yesterday is improved by the invention of to-day, and that again is followed by still further improvements on the morrow. But it is not so with Christianity, with the gospel of Christ. That embraces truths and doctrines which are not to be affected by time or chance. It cannot be said of them, as may be said of the arts and sciences, that there is no limit to the changes which they may undergo. They are more fixed and durable than the everlasting hills."—Pp. 19, 20.

At the same time Mr. Madge protects himself from the charge of abetting a stagnant and unprogressive spiritual condition.

"By this I do not mean that Christianity, in all its aspects, in all its relations to human life and duty, is so fully and perfectly understood that no further light can be thrown upon it. I do not suppose that the great idea of God is exhausted; or, that our views of his perfections are all so clear and comprehensive as to admit of no enlargement; or, that there are no parts of scripture into the import of which we may not gain a deeper insight. By reflection, by the aid of a more instructed reason, by the light of a purer spirit, we may rise to higher conceptions of God's truth than we have yet attained to. All I would maintain is, that though this may be the case, the truth itself remains the same, yesterday, to-day and for ever. Christianity, in all its essential features, is to me the expression of the most absolute and perfect religion. The language, however, which we sometimes hear in reference to this subject, would seem to imply an expectation that, after outgrowing the present dispensation, a new dispensation is some day to come down from heaven, better

adapted to man's estate in this world, and to his preparation for another. On what grounds such an expectation is entertained, by what signs or promises it is indicated, I am wholly at a loss to surmise. For when we look at Christianity and become acquainted with its true nature and character, what nobler principles, I ask, what greater or more precious truths can be unfolded to us than those which lie plainly before us in the records of Christ's teaching and life?"—Pp. 20, 21.

The preacher elucidates this thought in reference to man, as ignorant and needing knowledge, in doubt and wanting light, a sinner and panting for assured forgiveness; and thus closes this portion of his subject by reference to man as liable to death:

"Is man mortal and does he pant to live again? Does the light of nature but faintly illuminate the dark valley of the shadow of death? Is the eye of reason alone unable to pierce through the gloom which surrounds the precincts of the grave? Again is the voice of Jesus heard saying, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall not die for ever.' Here, then, is the rock on which we may securely rest. When, in faith, I see Jesus rising triumphant from the tomb, and treading again, in company with some of his beloved disciples, the very ground which he had trodden before, then I am assured that death is swallowed up in victory and that this mortal shall put on immortality. So felt that wise and good man, the late Dr. Arnold, who said, in reference to the loss of one of his family, 'Nothing afforded us such comfort, when shrinking from the outward accompaniments of death, as the thought that all these had been around our Lord himself, round him who died and rose again, and is now alive for evermore.'

"It is this and the other great truths of the gospel to which I have adverted that are stamped with the impress of imperishable value. From generation to generation they remain the same. I can hardly imagine any thing more glorious, as respects the character of God, any thing more welcome and satisfactory to the heart of man."—Pp. 22, 23.

The value of this pamphlet is increased by the addition of Mr. Bache's solemn prayer of dedication. We observe, too, that for the instruction of those who are not familiar with our religious principles and habits, a statement, with well-chosen scripture vouchers, is prefixed of the worship at the Church of the Messiah and its Great Object, and the Spirit in which it will be conducted.

Could this pamphlet be printed in the cheapest form and a copy be placed in the hands of every householder in Birmingham, it would, we believe, dispel much prejudice, and bring many inquiring worshipers to the Church of the Messiah.

The Hallowed Spots of Ancient London. Historical, Biographical and Antiquarian Sketches, illustrative of Places and Events made Memorable by the Struggles of our Forefathers for Civil and Religious Freedom. By Eliza Meteyard (Silverpen). 4to. Pp. 291. London—Marlborough and Co., Ave-Maria Lane. 1862.

This elegant volume is well-timed. It will, we think, prove not the least welcome of the works (two or three of which await a notice on our editorial table) which give the kind of information that people need to make their celebration of this Bi-centenary year intelligent and hearty. Not, indeed, that Miss Meteyard has treated her subject in a narrow or sectarian spirit. She writes as a liberal and tender-hearted

Englishwoman, ready to give her admiration, her love and her tears, to all persons of noble and pure character and to all innocent sufferers. She treats of London as "a central spot on which the great battle of civilization has been fought." Her book is not, and does not pretend to be, a perfect history of London. It is a selection of sketches of many long-past scenes and of the mighty dead, all executed in a picturesque manner and in a commendable spirit of impartiality. The enumeration of the subjects of the several chapters will illustrate their variety and interest. After a brief introductory sketch of ancient London and its site, we have—1. Smithfield, its Monastery and its Martyrs. 2 and 3. The Tower and its illustrious Imprisoned. 4. York House, Strand, and Gray's Inn. 5. The old Fleet Prison—the Sufferings of the Nonconformists. 6. The Temple and Lincoln's Inn. 7. St. Stephen's Chapel and Whitehall. 8. Bread Street, Aldersgate Street, Petty France and Cripplegate. 9. The Thames, Lambeth and Southwark, the Church of the Pilgrim Fathers. 10. Bunhill Fields. 11. The Bull-and-Mouth Meeting-house, and White Hart Court, Gracechurch Street. 12. Hampstead, Acton and Oxendon Street. 13. Stoke Newington and Freeman's Court, Cornhill. As illustrative of Smithfield, Miss Meteyard narrates in some detail the cases of Sautre and of Anne Askew. In respect to the latter, she might, if her work had been a little later in composition, have benefited by Mr. John Gough Nichols' valuable work, entitled "Narratives of the Days of the Reformation," in which the story of the racking of this gentle lady by the hands of Wriothesley the Chancellor and another is, notwithstanding the incredulity of modern historians, proved beyond all reasonable doubt. We hope to return to this subject when able to notice Mr. Nichols' volume.

When speaking of Lambeth, Miss Meteyard mentions the fact that, prior to the erection of the Lollards' Tower, the Archbishops of Canterbury had a prison at Lambeth. A prison was in the then state of ecclesiastical affairs an important and necessary adjunct to a Bishop's palace.

When treating the history of the Pilgrim Fathers, Miss Meteyard might have given greater exactness to her statements had she consulted the late Mr. Hunter's admirable book on their early history. Some of the results of his inquiries she has attained, but probably at secondhand.

Miss Meteyard makes an interesting chapter out of Bunhill Fields, the great burying-place for nearly two centuries of the Nonconformists. We extract a part of her account:

"The Plague of 1665 raged, as we have seen, more fearfully in Cripplegate than elsewhere. It began there with the first outbreak of the pestilence, and only ceased at its close. There were reasons enough, we think, for this. The miasma of the great fen still lingered there, and does in a degree to this day. Any intelligent person, or one at all acquainted with a fen country, could at once tell, if passing through Finsbury Square or the City Road, that both had been built over a morass; the atmosphere is so totally unlike that of all other parts of London. We have constantly observed this. At the time of the Great Plague, therefore, matters must have been much worse, as many open ditches, and other nuisances complained of by Stow, still undoubtedly remained.

"The inhabitants of Cripplegate thus dying by hundreds, the ordinary churchyards were soon filled, and it was found necessary to form a common receptacle for the dead. A spot was therefore chosen to the north of the Artillery

Ground, and a huge pit dug, known as the Finsbury Pit. It was this probably that Pepys, whose curiosity was astounding, went to see, under the date of August 30th, 1665. 'I went forth and walked to Moorfields, to see (God forgive my presumption) whether I could see any dead corpse going to the grave, but, as God would have it, did not. But, Lord, how everybody looks and discourses in the street of death, and nothing else; and few people going up and down, that the town is like a place distressed and forsaken.' It was of this pit, 'then lying open to the fields,' that De Foe tells the horrible story of a dead-cart slipping in, dragging with it the horses, and overwhelming the wretched driver, whose whip could be seen sticking out from among the dead. In this, as in the other plague-pits, the infected came in their delirium and threw themselves. As there was no possibility of rescuing them, it was found necessary to watch the place both day and night.

"As soon as the dire pestilence was over, the pit was covered and walled in, 'at the sole charge of the City of London,' as an inscription over the western entrance still shows. For a time it may have been left to its solitude, for the associations connected with it were of a very painful kind; yet for this reason of being disliked or avoided, it probably was, that many of those who in life had been imprisoned and persecuted for conscience' sake, and when dead often denied burial in the ordinary churchyards, were brought to find a grave. To us there is something touching in the thought that those who in life had nobly asserted that liberty of faith, liberty of opinion, liberty as citizens and subjects, were the right of *all* men, mingled their dust at last with the unrecognized dust of countless thousands. Thus willing, even in the grave, to let the Christian law of equality prevail!

"At length, after the corporation of London had permitted the burial of many Dissenters, the ground was leased by a person of the name of Tindal. It then became known as 'Tindal's Burial Ground,' as previously it had been called the 'New Burial Ground.' Dunton, in his 'Life and Errors,' speaks of it by this latter name. It thus became what Southey terms it, the 'Campo Santo of the Dissenters,' being devoted to the burial of Nonconformists only. Its present appearance does exceeding credit to the Dissenters of London. It seems well kept and well cared for; and, seriously speaking, has a more *cheerful* aspect than all else beside in the dull regions of Finsbury. As jewels are worth keeping in fair caskets, so is the dust of Bunyan and De Foe amidst pleasant greenness and reverent and comely order."—Pp. 219, 220.

There is a melancholy fact connected with this sacred spot, in which lie the ashes of Bunyan, Goodwin, Owen, George Fox, Defoe, Dr. Watts, and a long roll of worthies. In rather more than five years' time it will lapse, by the termination of the lease, to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who will have the temptation of letting it afresh on building leases, and rows of cottages and shops may obliterate sites sacred to the hearts of multitudes. The circumstances of this case will need rigid inquiry. If necessary, an Act of Parliament must be sought, and in good time, to prevent the sacrilege, as all good men would regard it, of turning this memorable spot into common building land.

Acton and Oxendon Street are of course introduced into this volume to enable the authoress to do honour to Richard Baxter. She speaks enthusiastically of the portrait of this great man in the keeping of Dr. Williams's Trustees. Could a more interesting memento of this Bi-centenary year be produced from Dr. Williams's Library than an engraving in the best style of modern art of this beautiful portrait? As a speculation it would be perfectly free from risk if well executed, and if the fact of the possibility of procuring it were made sufficiently public.

INTELLIGENCE.

EVENTS OF THE MONTH.

Meeting, at the Library in Redcross Street, of the Presbyterian Ministers and the Lay Deputies (Feb. 1).—Brief, but in some respects different reports of this meeting have appeared in the *Inquirer* and *Herald;* and strictures on the proceedings have appeared in both papers. The body of Presbyterian ministers and the lay deputies are, we may observe, not much accustomed to meet. Neither body has funds or officers with the leisure necessary to carry on any considerable public work. As to the ministers, their number is not large, and only a portion of them attend the meetings. Most of those who do attend are already burthened with heavy public and personal duties. The lay deputies constitute a body which has fallen into desuetude; and we believe we are justified in the statement that in some of our London and other neighbouring congregations no nomination of lay deputies has been attended to for several years. Now to persons who understand the requirements and difficulties of public business, it will be sufficiently evident that two bodies thus imperfectly constituted and without definite organization are not fitted to undertake any business requiring long periods of effort and large combinations. To entrust, under these circumstances, to such a society of gentlemen any large plan of philanthropic action would scarcely have been wise. But it did appear to some of our friends (and those the men that are cheerfully working in other ways) that the ministers and the lay deputies might successfully set on foot a scheme of a social celebration of the sufferings and heroic virtues of the 2000 confessors of 1662. Separated as the Nonconformists and liberal Churchmen are in respect to theology, a common religious service is impracticable. One, though we still hope not the only ground of common action open alike to Nonconformists of all shades and to the lovers of religious liberty, seemed to be a social celebration of the approaching anniversary. It was, and with reason, believed that for such a purpose a gathering of eminent and good men of all religious parties, but united in the love of freedom and in honouring those who make sacrifices for conscience, might be got together under the presidency of a distinguished and venerable nobleman, whose whole career has been a continued service to the cause of freedom, civil and religious.

The object of those who were the means of calling together the ministers and lay deputies at Redcross Street, was to forward such a mode of celebrating this Bi-centenary year. Other modes of celebration had previously and by other bodies been deliberately chosen; and many of those who formed part of the meeting at the Library are, it is well known, giving their attention and aid to plans not unworthy of the interesting anniversary. It is desirable that those plans should be carefully matured and prudently started before the details are made public. The only scheme as yet ripe for official announcement, is the delivery in London and the neighbourhood of a course of lectures explanatory of the history and principles of the ejected clergy. We hope that the announcement will appear in our advertising page this month. Other and more important plans are still under consideration, but we do not feel yet at liberty to speak of them. A premature discussion respecting them in our weekly organs would, we fear, looking at some precedents, neither promote the unanimity of our friends nor the success of the plans.

The meeting at the Library gave its deliberate sanction (not indeed unanimously, for two gentlemen present expressed their dissent) to the proposal, and appointed a Committee to carry it into effect. *Before that Committee could meet, and of course long before they could communicate to the public their plan of action, the whole proceeding was condemned in a series of newspaper articles and letters.* We can have no wish to fetter the liberty of our press, but we may question the judgment displayed in this matter. Some of the criticisms of the writers hostile to the social celebration, would, we think, have appeared unnecessary even to themselves had they kept before them the words of the resolution which they condemn. The propriety of a social celebration of this or any anniversary, is confessedly a matter upon which persons differing in taste will necessarily hold different opinions. We can to some extent sympathize with those who express some repugnance to public dinners. But however disliked or ridiculed, the public dinner is one of our recognized English institutions. It is the mode sanctioned by the habits of men of all classes of calling together those who are animated by common principles, and who wish to strengthen or educate public opinion upon any important question. The celebration by a dinner affects no great principle, and

opposition to it need not be made matter of conscience. They who dislike it will of course keep away, and their absence will be a sufficient expression of their nonconformity. We cannot help thinking that the limits of useful criticism have on this occasion been exceeded by more than one of the writers who have opposed the dinner celebration.

It is not a very high effort either of logic or of wit to dispute the connection between a principle and a dinner, or to fix on men, and especially ministers of religion, the charge of undue aptitude for dining. What course the Committee will take, we cannot pretend, not belonging to it, to say. We shall neither wonder at nor blame them, if, under the circumstances, they decline to accept the trust imposed on them. The time of gentlemen possessing the not common talent for public business is very valuable to them. They may be willing to give time and money for a public object, in securing which they are not only free from captious criticism, but assisted by a fair proportion of sympathy. But they may well hesitate, if, before they can proceed to action, they must fight their way in public newspapers, and again refute objections which when originally stated failed to make any impression. Men liberal of time and money, and brave enough for a Crimean campaign, may without any imputation on their courage decline a newspaper controversy. We have felt it a duty to make these observations, because we think an error of judgment has been committed which is likely to endanger the public interests. For we hold that those who do, simply from a sense of duty, the work of the public are entitled to the largest courtesy; to frank support when they are right, and to considerate forbearance even where they unintentionally go wrong. If a different practice is allowed to prevail, we fear that the number of those both able and willing to work disinterestedly for the public, small as it is now, will become inconveniently smaller.

The Unitarian Young Men's Christian Association.—The newspapers sometimes give us interesting glimpses of the working of this useful Society in the town of Belfast. The Rev. J. Scott Porter has been, and we believe still is, giving a course of lectures, which have been as instructive as interesting, on Early English Literature. Great good may be done by efforts of this kind. They bind our ministers and the younger members of our body by intellectual and personal ties. Even if the lectures do not tread on religious ground (though this can be but rarely the case), they will extend the lecturer's moral power. Where persons of other sects are hearers, it is not easy to calculate the beneficial influences which Unitarians of culture and taste may diffuse around them.

Conference of former Students of the Unitarian Home Missionary Board.—This annual meeting, though held on Jan. 23, was not reported till the *Herald* of Feb. 8 appeared. The proceedings included the reading of an essay by Rev. Geo. Fox on the "Ministry and Missionary Work." Rev. W. W. Robinson read an essay on "Some Departments of Ministerial Labour;" and Rev. William Mitchell one on "The Relation of the Principles of Unitarian Christianity to the Spirit of the Age." All three essays were discussed with freedom and candour. Some of the opinions, as briefly reported, seemed crude and vague, but the needed criticism and correction were promptly applied by one or another of the speakers who took part in the discussion. The whole proceedings did credit to the earnestness and intelligence of the ministers. They were presided over by Dr. Beard, who must have felt not a little gratified by these living proofs of the success of the Home Missionary Board.

The Rev. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley.—The best book in the English language on Sinai and Palestine is that of the Canon of Christchurch, whose name heads this note. It displays learning, taste and a deeply religious spirit, without any tincture of fanaticism. The picturesque local descriptions are made more impressive by a careful enumeration of the historical events connected with each locality. It is with pleasure, therefore, that we observe that this accomplished clergyman is attached to the suite of the Prince of Wales, and will accompany him in his visit to the Holy Land and the East. What increases our satisfaction at this appointment is, that it adds another to existing proofs that the Court of Queen Victoria holds itself aloof from all narrow ecclesiastical influences and prejudices, and exercises its right to choose the best man for an important office without regard to the diversities of "orthodox," "evangelical" or "broad" Church. We only hope that the better qualities of Canon Stanley may not be too soon *mesmerized* by the drowsy influences of a mitre. Let bishoprics be kept for men who may be improved but cannot be injured by their narcotic influence. They have spoilt good men enough.

The Islington Unitarian Congregation (Jan. 29).—The first annual meeting was held in the school-room, now, we are pleased to observe, eclipsed by the new

Unitarian church rapidly hastening to a completion, and which promises by its beautiful architecture to be a conspicuous ornament to the district. There were 150 persons present, including several of the ministers of other congregations. Mr. Ierson, the much-respected minister of the church, alluded to the notorious threat of certain orthodox persons, that in Islington a Unitarian church should never find a place, and the disappointment to which those persons were now doomed. He spoke of the freedom and other attributes of the Unitarian church, and wondered that men of liberal instincts, driven out of the Church of England by intolerant creeds and contradictory articles, should hesitate to join the Unitarians. He pleaded for greater cohesion in the Unitarian denomination. Would that his advice on this point were taken to heart by them! Why should the centrifugal force be generally the stronger in a body like ours? Without compromise of individual independence, there might be much more hearty co-operation than exists. If there be a craving for a silent but effectual Act of Uniformity in our church, it is an inconsistency that must engender weakness and entail disappointment. Let each man speak out fearlessly his honest thought, and having done so be prepared to greet in kindness and act heartily with any whose *principles* accord with his, though in many *opinions* they may differ. We have strength enough for the great work we are called upon to do in vindicating religious liberty and purifying Christian doctrine, if it were wisely directed and applied with united spirit. The more "orthodox" Dissenters, notwithstanding differences as great as any that affect us, set us an example of union in action which we might advantageously copy. Is there not something morbid in the Nonconformity which expends its whole strength in opposing the plans of others, without proposing any of its own? With respect to the Islington meeting, we may add that some excellent addresses were given by Mr. Alderman J. C. Lawrence, Mr. S. Sharpe, Rev. J. C. Means and Mr. J. T. Preston.

The Carter-Lane Mission.—The Unitarian newspapers contain an appeal on behalf of this benevolent Christian agency that well deserves the attention of our friends. The excellent day-school for girls, the large Sunday-school and their associated institutions (including a Library, Benevolent Fund, Savings' Bank, &c.), are happily not to be dispersed by the removal of the congregation from Carter Lane to Islington. A large room has been secured in Sermon Lane for Sunday use, in which the Sunday-school will be continued, and an evening service will be added. When such names as those of Warren, Preston, Nettlefold, Lawrence, Chamberlain and Clarke, appear among the laymen directing this important effort, its success may be foretold with tolerable confidence. The day-school is carried on as before in the premises in Cobb's Court. The Rev. Robt. Spears will act as pastoral visitor, and some of the Stamford-Street congregation (of the increase of which under his able and vigilant pastorship we hear cheerful tidings) will aid as teachers. Of the £200 per annum which this Mission will cost, a large portion is already raised. The aid of the friends of education and of Unitarian Christianity is earnestly desired.

How we manage our internal Controversies.—After spending an hour in looking through some recent Unitarian writings, we feel it to be a duty to jot down a note respecting the spirit of controversy. We have recently spoken of Unitarian Christianity as the religion of common sense and goodnature. We should be sorry just now to have to justify this definition in relation to the mode into which we seem to be falling of conducting our controversies. The old rule of theological controversy was, as Dr. Jortin sarcastically observed, not to allow an adversary to have either common sense or common honesty. The early English Unitarians pursued a different course, and won from Archbishop Tillotson this commendation: "To do right to the writers on that side, I must own that generally they are a pattern of the fair way of disputing, and of debating matters of religion without heat and unseemly reflections upon their adversaries. . . . They generally argue matters with that temper and gravity, and with that freedom from passion and transport, which becomes a serious and weighty argument; and for the most part they reason closely and clearly, with extraordinary guard and caution, with great dexterity and decency, and yet with smartness and subtility enough, with a very gentle heat and few hard words." Compared with their Unitarian opponents, the Archbishop pronounced some of the Protestant and most of the Popish writers of his day "mere scolds and bunglers." We fear that the impartial observer of to-day will think us sad bunglers in comparison with our forerunners. We have no disposition to question the smartness, subtility or dexterity of our writers, whether in leading articles or in the letters of correspondents; but we could have wished that their "heat" had been "gentle," and their "hard words" fewer. It is a matter of some importance to begin with a clear understanding of the opinion we propose to

confute, and to be quite sure that what we deny, the person whom we criticize is disposed to maintain. We once knew a worthy man who was a model of fair dealing in argument, and who seldom failed at least to modify his opponent's views. Being asked what his process was, he said he seldom liked to speak on matters on which he had not previously thought, and that in thinking out a subject his mode was to make for the time his opponent's case his own, and then to think how he could best reply to every argument brought against it. By thus pleading from the opponent's brief, he came thoroughly to comprehend, without the hindrance of personal feelings, the merits of both sides. If it should be suggested that such a process would nip in the bud many of our controversies, we may reply, If it should, so much the better!

Installation of Rev. John Jellie (Feb. 5). This gentleman, lately of Moneyrea, was installed by the Presbytery of Antrim to the charge of the York-Street congregation, Belfast. The several parts of the service were conducted by Rev. Hugh Moore, Rev. David Gordon, Rev. S. C. Nelson and Rev. John Porter. The minister installed on this occasion made a solemn declaration of his being a Christian in faith, and of his being recognized as such by the Presbytery and the congregation.

Meeting of Parliament (Feb. 6).—The assembling for another session of the great Council of the Nation was marked by an almost startling quietude. The dark cloud of sorrow which throws its shade over the throne hushed party strife into silence. Eloquent as was the tribute paid from both sides of each House to the memory of the late Prince Consort, the most expressive token of the nation's sympathy with the Queen in her bereaved condition was in the wish and intention, implied if not directly expressed, that no needless party struggles, possibly involving an early change of the administration and imposing new anxieties and toils on the Sovereign, should mark the session. Such expressions must not in the close balance of parties in the Lower House be interpreted too strictly; but they unquestionably indicate the strong feeling of the hour of what is due to the Queen. The smoothness with which our constitutional government works, with a parliamentary opposition numbering nearly half the present House of Commons, is a satisfactory proof of the good sense and loyalty of our representatives. Tories and Whigs, Conservatives and Libérals, are as Englishmen at one in loyally honouring Queen Victoria and our happy Constitution, in the maintenance of which her whole reign has been conspicuous. There are some causes of national anxiety; but look where they may, whether across the Channel or the Atlantic, to Vienna or Petersburg, Englishmen may well devoutly thank the God of the nations for their privileges and blessings.

Birmingham District Unitarian Association (Feb. 10).—We welcome into the wide field of missionary effort this latest born Unitarian Society, the idea of which was created by the religious services begun and carried on at Spon Lane by the Unitarian ministers in and around Birmingham. The report of the Committee recommended the appointment of a paid agent to carry on the work of the mission. A beginning has been made of a theological library, and a theological class has been formed and instructed by Rev. Charles Clarke, the class consisting of lay preachers and those that desire to fit themselves for preaching. A favourable report of the church and school at Spon Lane was presented. Unitarian worship has also been conducted at Redditch, where a secession of some intelligent persons from the Methodist body had opened a door for Unitarian preaching. It is hoped that a chapel will be built here. Eight persons had been appointed by the Council as local preachers. A friend had contributed £100 to the funds of the Association. Some excellent addresses were given by Rev. Samuel Bache and others, both laymen and ministers. We regret to observe that illness prevented Rev. Chas. Clarke from taking a part in this meeting.

New Education Minute (Feb. 13).—Lord Granville in the House of Lords and Mr. Lowe in the Commons stated what concessions they proposed to make to the objections brought against the proposed New Minute. These are numerous, and shew either conscious weakness in the plan or undue deference to the objectors. The Minute is not to be applied to Scotland, nor to training colleges. The examination test is not to be applied to infants under six,—Mr. Lowe admitting that they have "carried a good principle a little too far in proposing it." And while repudiating the claim of "vested interests," he yields something in behalf of the present certificated teachers, by giving them the first lien upon the Government grant paid to the managers of each school. Lord Granville rebuked with severest ridicule the "religious objection" which has been brought to bear upon the new Minutes. He quoted a Law Lord as having once said that lawyers in the courts used all their arguments, but in Parliament only their best; and these *religious* objectors were

like the lawyers in court. His Lordship also recited a current story of a recent discussion at a diocesan board, where it was agreed that the religious difficulty would be removed if the capitation grant were raised from a penny to twopence.

In alluding to these explanations, the *Times*, we observe, charges upon the Council of Education the same grievous fault which we have repeatedly pointed out, and which these new Minutes do not in any degree repair, though the Commission in their late Report had drawn attention to it: "It did not select rather the poor and leave those who were able to pay for their own schooling, but went on the precisely opposite principle, giving its best aid to the children of an independent class, and neglecting the utterly destitute." (*Times*, Feb. 14.) This is still a true description of the operation of the Education grant.

Abolition of Church-rates (Feb. 19).—Talk, if not action, on this subject has begun both in and out of Parliament. Sir John Trelawney, undismayed by the equal voting on the third reading of his Bill last session and the Speaker's casting vote against it, has again introduced his Bill for the simple abolition. This is of course a matter of Parliamentary tactics, as he can have no expectation of inducing Parliament in its present Conservative temper to sanction the alteration he proposes. Mr. Alcock has placed on the table of the House of Commons a Bill for the voluntary commutation of Church-rates. Mr. Newdegate has his Bill to establish a charge in lieu and for the commutation of Church-rates, and to afford facilities for the provision of other funds applicable to the purpose. Mr. Sotheron Estcourt proposes to put an effectual block to Sir John Trelawney's Bill by an amendment to be moved on the second reading of the Abolition Bill: "That it is unjust and inexpedient to abolish the ancient customary right, exercised from time immemorial by the ratepayers of every parish in England, to raise by rate amongst themselves the sums required for the repair of their Church, until some other provision shall have been made by Parliament for the discharge of those obligations to which, by custom or statute, the churchwardens on the part of the parish are liable." In the face of this complication, the Abolition Committee has met, under the presidency of Sir Charles Douglas, to consider the best course of action for those who seek to put an end to compulsory church-rates. It was announced that Sir John Trelawney intends to test the sincerity of the numerous professions from the Conservative side of the House last session of a desire to settle the question by some fair and moderate compromise, by deferring the second reading of his Bill until ample opportunity has been given to its opponents of proposing their scheme and taking the sense of Parliament thereon. The Committee approve of Sir John Trelawney's proposed course, and have passed a resolution to the effect that it is the duty of those who brought about the Speaker's casting vote last year—a vote expressly given on the presumption that the House desired to deal with the subject in some other way—to produce without delay a scheme which will give effect to their expressed desires. We have no expectation that any legislation will result from the threatened Conservative movement. Churchmen will be as hard to please in this matter as Dissenters. The clergy generally (there are some honourable exceptions) are like children who wish both to eat their cake and have it. They will not abandon the sweets of a rate, but they would like to get rid of the bitter condition of giving Dissenters the opportunity of disputing it. We are not unwilling to admit that the subject has serious difficulties. We have no wish to see our venerable parish churches fall into dilapidation and ruin; and so sadly has the Church system enervated private generosity, that in many retired rural districts no rate depending on the voluntary principle would be raised. If a Parliamentary battle comes on on Church-rates, so equal are the two parties and so difficult is the subject, the probability is that the attacking army will be worsted. With this opinion, we think the Abolition Committee are wise in leaving the field clear for their opponents to take the initiative. Nonconformists can afford to wait, and in the mean time they must rigidly scrutinize every proffered Bill, and resolutely oppose any plan which, while perpetuating the burthen of church-rates, would in any degree interfere with the right of parishioners to determine whether or not they will tax themselves for Church purposes, and to what amount.

The scheme embodied in Mr. Newdegate's Bill is one of an extraordinary kind, considering that it is offered as a sort of compromise. It proposes to shift the burthen of a church-rate from the tenants to the proprietors, and to make it a perpetual charge on real property. It does away with the right of the parishioners to decide whether or not they will tax themselves for Church purposes. By way of simplifying the collection, he provides that (dropping the obnoxious term Church-rate) a new impost, to be called a "Church charge," shall be assessed in the same manner as the county or borough rate, and

shall be received by county or borough treasurers. To save these officers the trouble of dividing the amount so collected amongst the parishes entitled to it, he proposes that they shall pay the whole amount to the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, by whom it shall be repaid to the respective churchwardens. He stipulates that no parish, or ecclesiastical division of a parish, shall be assessed to any rate excepting for its own purposes; and he is willing to grant entire exemption to those parishes in which church-rates have been refused thrice consecutively within the last seven years. Finally, he proposes to erect the incumbent and churchwardens of every parish into a Corporation, for the purpose of receiving "grants and gifts of land, buildings, and rent-charges in fee simple, and sums of stock in the Three Pounds per Centum Consolidated Bank Annuities, upon trust, to apply the net annual income derivable therefrom for the same purposes as the Church charge for such parish."—Although we are not sanguine in the expectation that the House of Commons will consent at present to abolish church-rates, we do not entertain the fear that a measure like Mr. Newdegate's will be accepted by either side of the House as a safe or just measure. It would be a boon to the clergy, but to no other class in the community could it be an acceptable measure.

OBITUARY.

Jan. 12, the Rev. Jacob Brettell, late minister of the Unitarian chapel, Rotherham. Mr. Brettell, son of the Rev. Jacob Brettell, many years minister of the Presbyterian chapel at Gainsborough, was born April 16, 1793. He studied for the ministry at the Manchester College, then stationed at York, the Tutors at that time being Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, Rev. John Kenrick and Rev. William Turner. His studies at York, which began in his sixteenth year, were interrupted by a painful summons to the dying bed of his excellent and much-loved father. After the death of his father, he remained at home for a short time; and all the consolation and sympathy that the most warm-hearted filial affection could offer to his bereaved mother was not wanting from her sorrowing and most affectionate son. He then resumed his studies at York; and having successfully completed his course, first began his ministerial duties at Ainsworth, in Lancashire, July, 1814. He afterwards became pastor of the Unitarian congregation at Rotherham in the year 1816; he continued minister of that congregation until from declining health he felt compelled to resign his charge in June, 1859.

The late Mr. Brettell was allowed by competent judges to have attained a very fair rank among scholars, being well read in the Latin and Greek classical authors, with a competent knowledge of some of the modern languages; and he was possessed of very just taste and great critical skill in English composition.

He published "The Country Minister," together with a few smaller poems and translations from some of the Latin and Greek poets; followed some time after by "Poetical Sketches from the Historical Books of the Old Testament." These works, which on their appearance were highly praised by critics and reviewers, shew his poetical taste and power. "The Country Minister" was declared especially to exhibit, in very fine versification, pure, lofty and patriotic thoughts, inspired by simplicity and truth, combined with extreme tenderness of feeling. The character of his mind being perhaps rather more imaginative and ardent than strictly logical, he delighted in finding and exhibiting truth in the impassioned tones and ornamented forms of poetic expression; yet in whatever related to biblical and philological criticism, he never seemed to betray a want of clearness, acuteness or precision.

The earlier portion of his career in Rotherham was brighter than that of his later years. It was in the earlier period that the "Country Minister," &c., were produced. He was then eagerly sought after to take a prominent share in the social and religious assemblies connected with the Unitarian denomination, to which he was ardently and affectionately attached, and at other more public meetings he sometimes appeared. His speeches on these occasions, enunciating high principles and generous sentiments in eloquent and fervent words, always elicited, what they well deserved, the warm approbation of his audience. He had then youth, with all its hopes and aspirations, on his side.

His later years were not so happy. He had, like most men who are advanced in life, outlived most, if not all, the friends of his earlier days. Many depressing events happened to him, some of them of a most afflictive character; his pecuniary

means, never large, became still smaller; yet he held bravely on, and was much less depressed by these trying circumstances than many other men would have been. This no doubt was attributable in some degree to his mental firmness, but to a much greater extent was it due to strong faith and confidence in the goodness and providential care of his Father and his God.

The writer of this very imperfect notice has been on very intimate and friendly terms with the late Mr. Brettell for more than thirty years—has seen him during some of his most trying hours; but never did his trust in the paternal love of God appear to give way or waver. His faith was abiding, sincere and heartfelt, and he derived from it the rich consolation he so much needed. This faith, which could not possibly arise from any other source than the sincerity of his religious convictions, was accompanied by a large-hearted charity, embracing all sects and parties in the Christian church, believing all things, hoping all things good of them and for them. No man could have more of the feeling; it was ever present, always consistent, manifesting itself not merely in words, but in acts,—his benevolence often taxing his slender means far beyond what Prudence might have permitted had she been much consulted in the matter. He was not blessed with too large a share of worldly wisdom, and may sometimes have thought and even acted in a way that wise people might say was not wise; yet never did one ungenerous, sordid or vulgar thought appear to have found even entrance into his mind.

Mr. Brettell, we may well suppose, has been unable to leave anything for his sorrowing family other than a most poetical legacy, consisting of some hundred volumes of books, and his good name. His widow survives to mourn his loss. Of his children living, two sons continue to reside in Rotherham; they have had for some years to struggle with adverse circumstances, but they have done so most meritoriously; and all acquainted with their peculiar situation will readily allow that they are ill provided with weapons for carrying on the hard warfare of life in which they are engaged. May they never want the helping hand of kind friends; may their way be made more easy and prosperous, and their exertions be crowned with the blessing and protection of their father's God!

He is now laid in his cold grave, gone from among the living. There remains for us the hope that the gates of the infinite Light are open to him, and admit him to a new phase of existence, in which he will meet with "the spirits of just men made perfect," in which his highest earthly aspirations will fall infinitely below the truth, and his most brilliant imaginings grow pale and obscure before the splendour of reality—where his adoration of the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his love of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be the result of knowledge, no longer of faith.

May God in his infinite mercy grant that so it be!

Jan. 15, at Gregville, Illinois, U.S.A., George Flower, Esq., late of Hertfordshire, England, aged 76; and on the same day, Eliza Julia, his wife; also, on Nov. 13, of wounds received at the battle of Fredericston, Missouri, Richard, their son, aged 29.

Jan. 29, at White Lodge, Standey, near Chesterfield, the residence of her nephew, the Rev. Alfred Turner Blythe, B.A., Mercy, widow of the late Rev. William Turner, Jun., M.A., for many years minister of Northgate-end chapel, Halifax, and previously Mathematical and Resident Tutor at Manchester College, York.

Feb. 15, at her residence, Springfield, Upper Clapton, Miss Sarah Warren, in the 83rd year of her age.

Feb. 16, at the Limes, Roslyn, Hampstead, Hannah, wife of the Rev. John James Tayler, Principal of Manchester New College, London, and eldest surviving daughter of the late Timothy Smith, Esq., formerly of Icknield, near Birmingham,—tenderly beloved for rare qualities of heart and mind which only those who knew them best could adequately appreciate, and which are now gone to bear their genuine fruits in that higher life with God, where human commendation is alike presumptuous and vain.

MARRIAGES.

Jan. 5, at Northgate-end chapel, Halifax, by Rev. R. L. Carpenter, B.A., Mr. William Horsfall to Miss Ann Bertwhistle.

Jan. 14, at Christchurch chapel, Banbury, by Rev. J. M'Dowell, John Chidzey, millwright, to Martha Prescott, all of Nelthrop.